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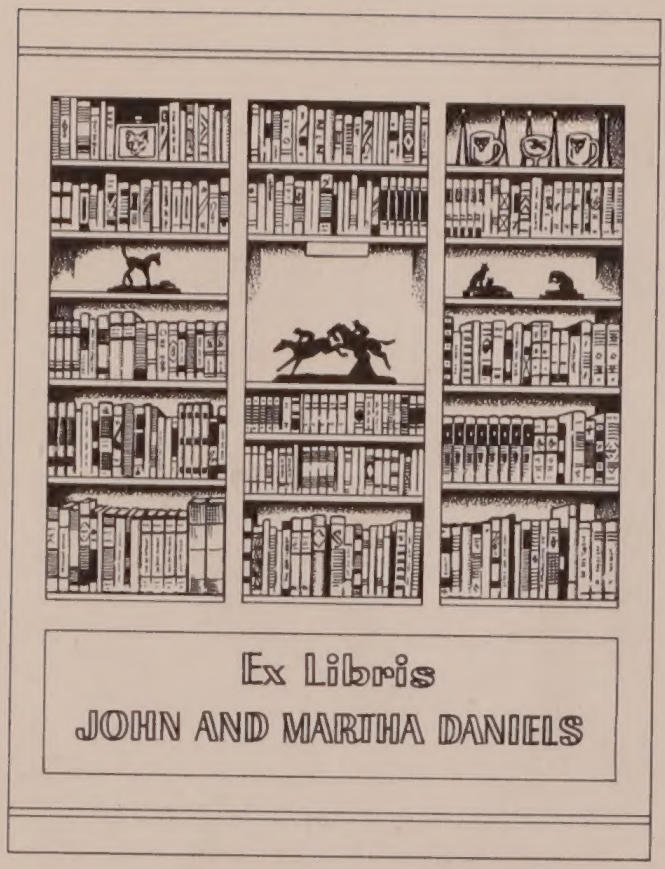

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THE NATIONAL SPORTS OF GREAT BRITAIN

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THE NATIONAL SPORTS OF GREAT BRITAIN

By HENRY ALKEN

FIFTY ENGRAVINGS

WITH DESCRIPTIONS

A NEW EDITION

METHUEN & CO.
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NOTE

THIS Issue is founded on the Edition published by Thomas M'Lean in the year 1825. It is entirely different from the National Sports in Folio published by Thomas M'Lean in the year 1823

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PREFACE

IN the following pages we submit to the inspection, and, we trust, approbation, of the Public, a Collection of new and original Drawings and Descriptions on most of the Sporting subjects, either formerly, or at present, in vogue in *Britain*, immemorially distinguished and celebrated as the land of Sportsmen; and we embrace the usual prefatorial occasion of tendering a few lines to the consideration of the reader, on the real merits of the subject, which, after so many able, amusing, and instructive predecessors, we have thus ventured to re-introduce to public notice.

Man was not intended by the Creator to pass a life of inaction and idleness: on the contrary, the most active duties have been imposed upon him, by nature and necessity. The pursuit of wild animals must be necessary to human subsistence in the early stages of society, hence man is naturally a SPORTSMAN; and from this

source, with the stimulus of native curiosity, and desire of action and diversion, originated the system universally designated as SPORT.

But our present business is with *Sport*, properly so called, the diversion and amusement of civilized nations, drawn either from the pursuit of wild animals reserved in that state, expressly for the purpose, or from witnessing those of the domesticated animals, placed in certain peculiar situations of action or suffering. For example, the *Chase*, — *Falconry*, — *Shooting*, — *Fishing*, — *Horse-racing*, — *Baiting* — and the *Combats of Animals*; also teaching them a variety of *performances*, in order to discern the extent of brute sagacity; and lastly, *Prize-fighting*, commonly called *Boxing*, or *Pugilism*, between individual champions of the human race.

Nothing can be more evident than the need and propriety of sportive diversions, which cheer the animal spirits and relax the mind perpetually bent on the serious duties of life. Especially necessary are they to the far greater portion of the opulent classes whose laudable determination is to make pleasure a business since they have neither the need nor the inclination to make business a pleasure. Viewing a reasonable share

of the pleasing dissipation of Sports and Pastimes as necessary to the exhiliration and recruiting of man's nature, we have not lost sight of the just claims of the labouring classes; but this is not the proper place to institute an enquiry, whether in such respect, our labourers of the present day, will, on research, be found on terms of equality with their equals of former, though less enlightened ages.

Field Sports and Diversions with Animals, in the early and half-civilized periods of the world, were necessarily, like the people themselves, rude and barbarous. There did not exist sufficient refinement in human reason to prompt it into any speculations on the feelings or sufferings of brutes; and if such sentiments should incidentally have arisen in the minds of individuals, they were stifled in their birth by all-controuling custom. Such an idea as pity for the sufferings of a beast could scarcely exist in human minds, constituted and instructed as they then were; on the contrary, animal misery was a grand and favourite source of pleasure, and the public exposure of animals to the most excruciating tortures, appears to have been one of the most gratifying exhibitions. This natural,

or unnatural tendency, in the mind of man, which he shares in common with the brutes his victims, and which, almost the highest degree of civilization has not been able to eradicate, has, doubtless, often exercised the lucubrations of the moral philosopher.

> —— detested, dastard sport,
> That owes its pleasures to another's pain;
> That feeds upon the sobs and dying shrieks
> Of harmless nature, dumb, but yet endowed
> With eloquence that agonies inspire,
> Of silent tears and heart-distending sighs!

From the above impure source are to be traced the thousand disgusting barbarities of the ancient Chase. Thence the origin of the abominable exhibition of BAITING animals, as it has been styled, of witnessing their writhing and suffering under the most horrible inflictions which human ingenuity could invent—as for example, 'the tortures of a cat in a glass bottle,' which *Shakspeare* could quote without a comment! Even the sensibilities of the softer sex were dormant on this subject. Women equally with men, even those of the most exalted rank, enjoyed the exquisite pleasure of a *baiting*, as we

have seen in the examples of the Queens *Mary* and *Elizabeth*. Senators also, a specimen of the collected wisdom of the time and country, and the prominent examples of public morality, did not neglect these favourite exhibitions, as *Evelyn* has borne testimony, who, in his celebrated *Diary*, records that in the year 1699, a bill of great consequence was lost in the House of Commons, by *ten* votes, so many friends to the measure being absent to see a tyger *baited* by dogs.

This unfeeling state of the public mind and manners, with respect to Animal Diversions, continued, although in a somewhat mitigated degree, throughout the eighteenth century. In the latter end of the reign of *Anne*, the atrocious spectacle was exhibited at *Newmarket*, of the famous racer *Dragon*, castrated at starting, winning his race over the *Beacon Course*, and dropping dead at the ending-post! Much of ancient barbarism still remained in the manners and practices of our Horse-coursers, both in their methods of training and management, and of riding, particularly crossing and jostling races, in which the jockies were accustomed to fight on horseback, striking each other, and their

respective horses with their whips, and aiming to cut out their antagonist's eyes! The barbarous public spectacles of baiting and tormenting were in high fashion, and flourished eminently under the auspices of the renowned hero of *Culloden*, and his minister *Broughton*. But a change was then silently and gradually taking place in the popular mind. Superior light had dawned upon human reason. The mental faculties were at length warmed and stimulated into action, and the result was a discovery that the feelings even of brutes ought to be respected. Dr. Johnson in the Rambler, had consigned to everlasting infamy the horrible cruelty practised upon the race-horse *Dragon*; and several meritorious individuals of the Church of England clergy, attempted to stem the torrent of cruelty exercised towards animals in various ways, but more particularly in the case of *Bull-baiting*.

About twenty-five years since, a proposition was made in the *Philosophical and Practical Treatise on Horses* that the *rights of beasts* should be recognized by the civil government: that they should so far be made participators in the social contract, as to have the benefit of legal remedy

in the case of unjust and undue trespasses on their feelings. The idea of the *rights of cattle* was soon after successfully ridiculed on the stage. But successful ridicule is not always the test of truth. If it be unjust and immoral to treat a beast unfairly and cruelly, it results as a consequence, that the beast has a right to be treated with fairness and justice. The right of the beast originates in the moral duty of the rational man, and wherever a right exists, there ought to be a remedy. In the above work a practical discrimination is made between the fair and lawful use of animals, and the abuse, whether with regard to business or SPORT, and the most ample scope allowed in the exercise of the latter. To this material point we have adhered in the following pages; in no case giving up the fair and lawful rights of the SPORTSMAN.

Since that period, various publications have appeared of the most meritorious character, in the same moral line. All the world knows of the humane *Lord Erskine's* bill, and its unmerited fate in parliament. But these united exertions have not been altogether unsuccessful, and ignorance can be no longer pleaded of this essential branch of moral duty.

THE NATIONAL SPORTS OF GREAT BRITAIN

THE RACE HORSE

THE Artist has presented us with a regular series on this subject so interesting to Englishmen, through the usual gradations, from the training of the RACER to the completion of his labours, and the test of scales and weights; the definitive verdict of which, must determine his right to the hard-contested prize.

To jog on with our fellow-labourer, but in far lighter labours: in the first place, what is this paragon of an animal, this RACER, in modern times, peculiar to that paragon of Isles, Britain—this horse so distinguished for superiority over all others on the face of the habitable globe, for speed, endurance, solidity and toughness of sinew, and ability to carry weight? He is of the indigenous species of Africa, part of Asia, and of South Eastern Europe—of Arabia and

and in all probability made twenty thousand by him. Sir Charles Bunbury refused a very heavy sum for Smolensko. Mr. Lambton has lately given two thousand two hundred guineas for Cedric.

RACING

TRAINING

THE general management of the Race-horse is familiar to most persons of this country. He is broke, or bitted, whilst a yearling, and even has raced at that early age; very frequently at two, and almost universally at three. His short portion of unemployed youth is spent in fine pasture, with an allowance of corn. Taken into training, he treads his native pastures no more. The first process is clearing his skin, and clothing him, as the plate represents. It should have been noted, that, for obvious reasons, and with few exceptions, castration can have no place in the racing stud. Racing stallions are destined, not only to get stock for the course, but for the perpetuation of that transcendant improvement, which they have made in our saddle and quick draught breeds of horses. Purgatives, in the stable phrase, *physic*, the basis of which is always *aloes*, soon ensues on taking in the colt or filly, to the extent of several doses. Walking exercise

on turf, the canter and moderate gallop, the brushing gallop and sweat, compose the training paces. Though to the Race-horse trotting is a natural pace, yet, from his form, he is not calculated to excel at it; nor did we ever read or hear of more than one race-horse matched to trot; that one was Infidel, by Turk, which, many years ago, won his money, by trotting fifteen miles in one hour over the road. In full exercise, the racers go out twice a day, otherwise once, taking water after the gallop, and a canter after water. Sweating, in full work, is performed by loading the horse with an additional weight of clothes, and galloping him, four or five miles, pushing him at intervals, to considerable speed, with the view of throwing out the perspiration. On pulling up, he is led into a sheltered place and scraped, wiped, walked out, and led home dry. A strong horse, fresh on his legs, is sweated weekly, or even twice in ten days. Trials are always had of young horses, in order to ascertain the rate of their qualifications. These are generally to the extent of one mile or two, against a reputed racer, and with proportionate weights. Horses also, in the course of the racing season, are tried previously to any great race or match. But neither this practice, nor trying against time, are of such frequent use as in former days; indeed, we seldom now hear of the latter.

RACING

SADDLING

THE important day having arrived, and the hour of trial approaching, the Racers are led gently towards the turf, on which the races are to be held; and walked up and down, until the drum shall beat as formerly, or the bell ring, for saddling. The horses are then stripped of their clothes, which are put into the hands of attendants, bundled up, and thrown on the back of a horse, in order to be ready on the instant of the conclusion of the race or heat; that the horses may be again clothed and protected, in their heated state, from dangerous atmospheric influence. In case of heats, the same ceremonies of stripping and clothing, saddling and unsaddling, necessarily take place before and after every heat. The racing finished, the horses are led home in the same order as they came, the winner, no doubt, with great honour, and amidst the plaudits of all the heroes of the stable.

The Plate impresses us with certain ideas,

which a long and intimate acquaintance with the business of the turf, has rendered familiar to us. Gentle reader, thou seest, somewhat in the back ground, the proprietor and his jockey, cheek-by-jole, in deep confab. What thinkest thou is the most important topic of this conversation? In all probability, the simple direction, whether the jockey be required to try to win, or try to lose. Indeed, it would be a peculiar hard case, for a Sportsman to be compelled to win against his will; in other words, against his interest. Old Q.– the late Duke of Queensbury, was once standing at the head of the betting circle, on Newmarket Heath, when his jockey, a raw lad, not having received his orders, went up to him, and, in a voice audible to all around, said—"Please your Grace, how am I to ride this match?" A loud laugh burst from the whole company; but the Duke, unembarrassed and with a good presence of mind, answered—"Ride! why do your best, and win if you can, to be sure!"

RACING

PREPARING TO START

THE Jockies having mounted, and perhaps walked their horses backward and forward awhile, are now adjusting themselves to their seats, and getting the bridle firmly and properly in hand. The foremost nag appears to be a ready one to start, and longing to be off; a sort, by-the-by, which full often have an equal, and somewhat too early, longing to be pulled up. They naturally belong to that speedy class which *can* run fast enough to tire themselves.

The severity of racing has been very judiciously abridged, especially at Newmarket, of late years. Running *heats* has, indeed, excepting on one or two occasions, been for many years disused there. The distances also are curtailed, a measure originally proposed by the late humane Sir Thomas Charles Bunbury, Bart. who presided during so many years in the Jockey Club, and was a breeder and trainer of Race Horses during the long course of nearly threescore years. The

majority of races now at Newmarket, extend only to a single mile; races over the course, or four miles, being not frequent as formerly. In the days of Childers, even six mile courses were run; a practice long since out of memory. In such as are styled 'Country Courses,' and for plates, the best of three heats is the custom: the usual distance for young horses, two; for aged, or all ages, four miles. NEWMARKET has long, or ever been, the metropolis of the TURF. DONCASTER and YORK follow with nearly equal steps. EPSOM, ASCOT, GUILDFORD, have their share of fame. It is somewhat singular that, no modern nation, excepting the British and Irish, have, or do, acquire any fame at the noble sport of Horse-racing, notwithstanding so many attempts, and their constant extensive purchases of English thorough-bred horses for the stud. We necessarily include the inhabitants of the United States of America, and of British India, among the British. In these countries the Turf flourishes, and its business is conducted on the English plan.

RACING

OFF!

THE horses are off!—the Chesnut, taking the lead, obviously shows that it is intended he should keep it, if in his power, and make the play through, to the ending post. The countenance of the jockey is an equal index that, to such effect, have been his orders. The other two are putting themselves in a form, to make a waiting race, to husband out the speed and wind of their horses, with the view of having a reserve of both, at the run in, or last push, which may carry them beyond the horse, which may have exhausted himself in making the play.

It is a common case, particularly when a considerable number of horses, or young ones start, for some of the jockies to be unable to get their horses off at the signal, in consequence, a part start without them. In this case; a false start, is called by those left behind, and the Clerk of the Course, recals the start. It has sometimes happened, that a false start has been called twice,

and even three times; and not seldom, that such a manœuvre has been practised by those jockies, who have not got a place in the start to their mind; or the trick may be sometimes played off, with a view to harass and baffle young horses or young riders. It is submitted to the Jockey Club, whether a remedy in the case be not expedient; and whether some general rule might not be laid down, that would be a preventive of the inconvenience.

RACING

DOING THEIR BEST

IN riding, especially a four-mile race, a number of runs may be made at particular parts of the course; but this before us, by the railing, appears to be the last, or the run in. The known, it may be called the universal rule, is, for the Jockey to lie by, and favour the speedy horse, that he may be as fresh as possible, to avail himself of his natural qualification at the last push, the only chance he can have to win the race. On the other hand, the rider of the *stout*, or lasting, and comparatively slow horse, takes the lead, and runs the course through, at the utmost speed his horse can bear, giving him those occasional *pulls*, which are necessary to prevent his coming to a stand-still. By this means, the speedy and less lasting, or perhaps jadish, horse, becomes at the final run so exhausted, that the slowest horse is metamorphosed into the speediest, and wins the race. This will happen even in running a mile; for, in truth, there is much running in a

mile, unless the difference in point of speed be too great. When two horses, equally stout, meet, their speed nearly on a level, and the weights equal, the race is terrible. We have thus stated the usual method of riding speedy and stout horses, which we believe has been almost universally adopted; but, at the instant, we recollect an account of a race, many years since, between two of the most famous horses of the day, Matchem and Trajan; and at which several of our old friends were present. It was over the B. C. at Newmarket, for the Whip and Two Hundred Guineas. Matchem, though known to be the slowest horse, was ridden a waiting race by John Singleton, a famous Yorkshire Jockey, and won the race. The case must have been, either that the difference of speed was not very great, or that Trajan was as jadish as speedy. An account of this race may be referred to in the Turf Register. During the race, those who were in a place to witness it, were much surprised at Singleton's plan of riding.

A glance at the plate, will show this to be a proper place to notice, and with utter reprobation, the barbarous and equally useless practice of excessive whipping and spurring these delicate and thin-skinned animals, during the last run; when it is an obvious mathematical certainty that, no horse can possibly add the slightest additional

portion to that degree of speed, which nature intended he should possess, or a single line beyond his natural extent of stride; and that horses generally, with very little urging, when running near together, or side by side, will spontaneously exert themselves to the very utmost of their natural powers. We are well aware of the existence of individuals, called, in the style of the Turf, *whipped* horses; in plain English, those sluggish animals, generally of the stout and lasting sort, which really require the whip and spur to force them to the utmost of their exertions. But this correction of them is always overdone, and, in fact, the notion itself is greatly overstrained, and, in a considerable degree one of custom. Besides, at the run in of a strongly-contested race, all are treated with equal barbarity, whether willing or otherwise, supposed to require it by their nature, or not; and that which is deplorable and contemptible enough, English spectators, both male and female, seem to enjoy the exhibition, in proportion to the excess of *cutting and slashing;* or our newspapers grossly misrepresent the matter, and calumniate the people. That numbers of horses have been whipped and spurred into losing their race, every man of experience can testify, and that races may be won without either whipping or spurring is in full proof, by thirty years experience of the late tender-hearted and compassionate Sir Charles

Bunbury; who, throughout that whole period, never suffered blood to be drawn from one of his racers, by whip or spur, yet was on a level with his competitors, in the number of his winning horses. But this savage practice is continued like other old and bad customs, and, with respect to the Jockies, there is an obvious difficulty in the case, which, indeed, the proprietors of race horses alone can remove.

RACING

GOING TO WEIGH

THE instant after pulling up at the Ending Post, and the determination of every heat or race, the horse being unsaddled, his jockey proceeds to be weighed, in presence of the Clerk of the Course, in order to give proof that he has ridden the stipulated weight — the next thing needful, after coming in 'first and first,' to entitle his principal to the prize. Some trifle, we believe, and two pounds for over-weight, is customarily allowed for waste. This gradual weighting of the horse (one of the nice points and refinements of Horse Coursing), is probably modern, and of English origin. In course, the lightest weights are set upon young horses, rising gradually to the five-year old and aged. The *minimum* and *maximum* have been, time out of mind, a *feather* and twelve stone, fourteen pounds to the stone; that is to say, horseman's weight. The term feather, in our Turf slang, indicates a boy of the lightest weight, capable of the functions of a Jockey. Mares are generally allowed some abatement of weight. By order of the Court, when King's

Plates were first given, the weight was settled at twelve stone for six-year-old horses; and ten stone for five-year-olds and mares, four-mile heats, with the view of encouraging a powerful breed of race-horses; the second duty of Turf stallions being the production of saddle-horses generally, and of horses for quick draught. So high a weight as twelve stone, excepting for King's Plates, is not in general use on the Turf; ten stone, that not often occurring, being the maximum. The term *catch* weights indicates, that the match, or race, is to be run without any stipulation on that score. *Handy-capping* is, when the weights in a race, have been settled by the judgment of an appointed handy-capper, who adjusts the weight to be carried by each horse or mare, according to the aggregate of their several ages, powers, and known or imputed qualifications; certainly the fairest possible plan of racing. A race *give and take*, or weight for inches, is so denominated from the rule, that a certain given height, suppose twelve hands, shall carry a given weight, that weight being gradually increased, on every inch upwards, to fifteen hands. It has been held, that with two horses, equally matched in all other respects, running four miles, an additional seven pounds carried by one will occasion the difference against him of a distance. We have reason to suspect the correctness of this opinion.

THE HUNTER

THE figure in view is that of a powerful, full-sized, three-part-bred HUNTER, master of sixteen stone over a strong country. The saddle, bridle, and position of the girths, are in the same form and style which has prevailed in England, with little variation, during nearly fifty years.

Horses for the purpose of hunting, in England, are selected chiefly in relation to the nature of the soil over which they are intended to hunt. Thus, thorough-bred racers and horses nearly approaching to the full blood, are chosen for downs and light open countries, where the utmost speed may be exerted and continued, and where the chace very often resembles a sweepstakes over the regular race-course. In a chace like this, the strong slow Hunter, or that half-bred horse, sometimes designated as, *par excellence*, the *Old English Hunter*, would help to make up but an indifferent back-ground. And this mode of selecting horses has prevailed

for several centuries past, indeed commenced with the modern English hunt.

But whatever description of horse is chosen for real service as a Hunter, he ought to have, generally, the true form and qualities of a good hackney or road-horse. Thus, he must not be leggy, long or loose-jointed. He must stand truly, his quarters must be well spread, his hocks sufficiently curved that his hinder feet may well support his loins, which must be wide and substantial. His hoofs also must be tough, and able to support him over the varieties of ground. His forehand must be lofty, he must carry his saddle in a good place; and with a mouth that will endure the necessary pulls, he must ride light in hand. His paces of most consequence are the walk, canter, and hunting-rate or long gallop. Should he be of warm temperament, he will, to speak generally, be most distinguished as a *flying*, if the opposite, as a *standing* leaper.

In the choice of a thorough-bred Hunter, the first object is to find a short-legged horse; the next, that he may concentre as many as possible of the above qualifications. It may be depended on, that a well-shaped horse particularly, is able to carry weight in proportion to his *blood*, which arises from the firmer substance of the tendons and fibres of the *south-eastern* horse, his superior

ductility; thence the animal's greater facility of motion and progression. In choosing a common bred horse for the field, and many such have made a capital figure over a strong country, and commanded a high price; not forgetting the rules already laid down, ability to carry weight and ready action are the essentials.

No horse, bred however he may have been, is equal to the labours of the field, until he shall have completed his fifth year. A horse rising five may, indeed, be hunted occasionally, and by way of training, but never over deep clays, in which the joints of the young horse, not yet fixed and settled, are so apt to be strained.

The education of a young horse for hunting, commences at the bar, where he is taught the standing-leap. As to the flying-leap, nature has taught it to most horses, and the field is the best school for it. The bar should be covered with horsecloth, and no extraordinary height ever presented to the colt, until he shall have become perfect in the action. The utmost patience and temper should be used, but great attention also shown to oblige the horse, on the completion of his leap, to clear his hinder legs, for which the flourish of the whip may be necessary. With some sluggish colts, it may be proper to cover the bar with furze, otherwise that had better be omitted. The Hunter, like the racer, requires

a purge or two, to lighten and prepare him for his gallops, to which he should be trained during two or three months previous to the hunting-season. These should be moderate; and most particularly, old, seasoned Hunters, should never be harassed and worn down with excess of training. Walking exercise, and a few canters, agree best with the state of body and limbs in which the severe labours of the seasons past must have left them.

RUNNING IN TO A STAG

WE have here an interesting and inspiriting view of hounds running into the Stag, who bravely stands at bay.

The Stag-Hound is the largest and slowest of the species at present kept in this country. He most resembles in form the old southern hound, and ought to possess the superior nose of his progenitor. He is heavy in the head, ear, and chops, which are amply supplied with pendant leather. This, indeed, is a description of the old Stag-hound; and perhaps tallies better with those of the royal packs, than with the few other packs which are at present kept in England; where the ancient and celebrated Stag-chase has been, long since, almost superseded by that of the Fox, which, at its early commencement, instead of a sporting-chase, was merely a scouring of the country by a great company of horse and foot-men, for the extirpation of an animal then held to be a destructive vermin. Thus *tempora mutantur*, and fashion has changed with time.

It has been conjectured that the original Stag-hound was produced from a cross between the blood-hound and the southern-hound. After all, in probability the blood-hound himself was a southern-hound, selected for superiority of size and of olfactory powers, which were indicated by the expansive capacity of his nostrils. The lighter Stag-hounds are evidently the result of a fox-hound cross, showing it in the ear and nose, the general form, and smaller size of the stern.

The royal establishment, at Windsor, for hunting the Stag, in which his late majesty, George III. formerly took so great interest, is still preserved in its pristine splendour and annual regularity. The Master of the Stag-hounds, always a man of high rank, received, many years since, a salary of two thousand pounds per annum. The huntsmen, with the addition of a residence at the kennel, one hundred and twenty-three pounds, and six Yeomen-Prickers, attendants on the chase, one hundred and four pounds per annum each, with an annual supply of new liveries, horse-cloths, saddles, and all stable requisites: horses being provided at their own expence. The king's Stag-hounds, according to the old rule, which we are not aware has been changed, commence their hunting-season on old Holy-Rood-day; and the hunting-days are the following

Tuesdays and *Saturdays*, until the first week in May. During the holiday-weeks of Christmas and Easter, the hounds continued to hunt the alternate days; and the two grand days of the season are those of *Holy-Rood* and *Easter-Monday*. The royal establishments for *buck-hounds* and *harriers* have been many years since abolished. In ancient times the royal hunts, and those of the nobility, in this country, were infinitely more extensive and costly than within any modern period; resembling, in those respects, and, indeed, in the mode of pursuing the game, the present customs upon the Continent. There were many instances during the reign of the *Plantagenets*, of the higher nobility keeping each to the number of sixteen hundred hounds, with a number of hunting-horses in proportion. Hounds were then of great value, and a capital hunter worth three or four hundred pounds, according to the present value of money. English horses and English hounds were, at that period, in universal repute.

The only part of Deer-hunting much affected by our modern *Nimrods*, or Fox-hunters, as most in unison with the natural chase, is that afforded by an out-lying Deer, tried for, and unharboured, by either Fox or Stag-hounds. This may be attended with a full share of those labours, difficulties, and exertions, so much courted by

the enthusiasm of the real votaries of the chase. The usual regular Stag-hunt, in England, is not the pursuit of a wild animal, but rather of one domesticated, at least bred and reared in parks, and carted to an appointed spot to be turned out before the hounds. The animal sometimes is sullen and spiritless, and will not start or run; but when he proves in good heart, a chase may follow of a length sufficient to satisfy the most ardent sportsmen, and to try the speed and goodness of the most staunch hounds and best-bred horses. The constant *view*, in a Deer-hunt, by well-mounted and staunch sportsmen, is one of its greatest attractions.

His late Majesty's regular and disciplined system of Stag-hunting was as follows:—The Stag was turned out, attended by two of the yeomen-prickers, whose duty it was to keep sufficiently near to him, one on each side, so as not to lose sight of him. The hounds were soon laid on the scent, and, after a while, stopped by the huntsman; a practice to which Deer-hounds are always trained, until the king and his attendants, who were not always able to hold way with the pack, came up. The chase then proceeded, consisting of several more runs, until the Stag could be taken, in order to be re-conveyed to his home quarters on the forest, his Majesty very seldom killing.

EARTH-STOPPER

THE EARTH-STOPPER is usually some ancient retainer of the *Hunting* establishment, who knows every track of the neighbouring country, and the haunts of the game. It is his business to close up the mouths of the fox or badger's den, by night, during their absence in quest of food; more particularly of the former, on the eve of a hunt, in order to be sure of finding; and that, when found, the chase may not run speedily to earth. Behold him, equipped with his belt, and furnished with lanthorn and spade, slowly marching along behind his terriers, which are *hunting* the earths, whilst his aged and experienced steed, cropping the grass, awaits his return patiently and silently. Earth-stoppers have also their use in the day-time, and are sometimes necessary attendants on the hunt. Unkennelling the fox by *digging* may be required, and they whose regular business it is to *stop*, may then turn their hands to unstopping.

It is sometimes a necessary precaution, to stop

such earths only as *cannot* be digged; because, if some foxes go to earth, and blood be wanted at last, it will then be known where to find it. Young foxes having been much disturbed will lie at ground; the earths at such times should be stopped three or four hours before day, or the hounds will scarcely find. The old Oxford toast runs thus:—

> "Hounds stout and horses healthy,
> Earths well stopped, and foxes plenty."

Nevertheless, that prince of Fox-hunting critics, Beckford, did no discredit to his long experience, when he said—A few large earths near to your house are certainly desirable, as they will draw the Foxes thither, and, after a long day, will sometimes bring you home.

FOX-HUNTING

GOING TO COVER

OUR Order of the Day for Hunting is as follows:—The appointment being made by the Proprietor of the hounds, in the latest *slang* of the field, a *fixture* of day, hour, and place of rendezvous, the hounds proceed under the guidance of the Huntsman and Whipper-in; whilst the gentlemen of the hunt ride their hacks to covert, where they find their well-trained hunters in readiness to be mounted for the sport. Here commences, especially when the meeting is numerous, and punctual as to time, a jolly and friendly shaking of hands, and mutual salutation among strangers, with a chat which is an encouraging prelude to the expected joys of the chace. A fine scent-lying morning gives a high zest to this: on the other hand, cold, sleety, and unpropitious weather, with a lingering and anxious waiting for the chearly announcement of Reynard breaking cover, give a seasoning not of the most agreeable kind, to the impatient tyro; whilst it excites, now and then, a few shrugs and testy smiles from the seasoned Fox-hunter.

Fox-hunters do not, now-a-days, go out so early as their forefathers did; but when foxes are strong, and not very plentiful, there is an advantage in early hunting. Whether late or early, hounds in course, will be led to the likeliest places for finding, which necessarily will be those coverts not lately drawn. The covert being thick with furze or gorse, must be drawn slowly and with care, as a fox will sometimes warily keep kennel until the dogs get nearly in upon him. Nor should the covert be quitted whilst any hounds, particularly those of best character, remain; for, frequently, when the hounds do not find at first, and are unsuccessful at the next covert, a fatiguing and useless, instead of a day of pleasure and animation, is the consequence.

The Huntsman ought not to be interrupted, though he may be sometimes judiciously assisted, whilst working his hounds in covert, when silence and circumspection are his leading maxims. There is, however, always a risk of stubbing the horses. But, in breaking cover, he should not spare his lungs, and every one in the field, at that jovial instant, is at full liberty to make as much noise as he shall please. 'Gone away!' is the proper halloo when the fox has broken cover, and should be given in the loudest key, and repeated, as a warning to gentlemen at a distance.

FOX-HUNTING

BREAKING COVER.—TALLY HO!

THOSE diurnal monitors and instructors, the Newspapers, have of late ingeniously enough, however accurately, furnished the uninitiated with the derivation from our Norman conquerors, of the leading terms in a Fox-hunt—Tally ho! and Halloo! The former indicates, literally—Away to the copse! In French, *Au taille!* but has always, within sporting memory, been accepted in an opposite signification; namely, when the fox is breaking cover. Halloo! is said to be derived from the French *au loup!* to the wolf! anciently hunted in this country, as well as in France; and the exclamation has been transferred to the Fox-hunt; wolves having been, many ages since, exterminated in Britain, as they might have been in France, under a popular and good government.

The silence and circumspection, so necessary whilst drawing covert, are now at an end; and the suppressed animal spirits of the hunters break

covert with the fox. All is hurry, bustle, exultation, and exclamation; and—Gone away!—Tally ho!—Halloo forward! are repeated, in chorus, after the Huntsman. With a strong scent they, whose lungs enable them to utter loud and piercing *screams*, are of great use, as that infernal noise alarms the fox, and helps to keep him going, and forward. It also encourages the hounds, and keeps them together, which is the beauty of the hunt.

But this exultation is momentary, at least not of long continuance; and, indeed, would be, as hot-headed and untrained individuals too often render it, a nuisance and a hindrance in other parts of the hunt. It gives place now to a choice of that part, which every gentleman determines to take in riding to the hounds. Not that all in a field, particularly if the company be numerous, have either knowledge of hunting, or temper sufficient to act with discretion, as the Proprietor of the hounds and his Huntsman too often experience. Early in the season 1821, a gentleman from London, went out for the first time with the ****** hounds; they came to a sudden check, and he rode in among them, and broke the leg of a young hound bitch, reputed among the most promising of the pack; previously to which he had been remarked as most lavish in giving tongue.

It is an old rule, of which every would-be Sportsman should be apprised, that, whilst the Huntsman is busily engaged, and the hounds drawing, the company also should, individually, perform their part of the duties of the chase. There must be then, no more *groups*, or conversation parties; indeed, it has been said, no two gentlemen should be seen together; since it ought to be the general object to spread as widely as possible around, that a fox may not sneak off unwitnessed. In the management of this tactic, as well as subsequently in the chase, every tyro should fix upon some Sportsman of experience and knowledge of the country, as his counsellor or pilot. Such a one should never venture into the field, but on a horse steady to hounds, and a safe and ready fencer: with these precautions, and by not being too forward, but following the best examples in the field, he may, in a season or two, qualify himself also to exhibit examples.

FOX-HUNTING

GONE AWAY.—FORWARD!

THE Huntsman sets off with the foremost hounds, and the Whipper-in, taking care that none are left behind in cover, follows, urging them forward, and driving on the tail hounds and stragglers. Now, the Sportsman's heart beats high, and in unison with those of the horses and dogs! They all seem equally to enjoy the sport, but—there is a BUT even in the most rapturous and exhilarating sports; for that which is sport to those, is amazement, fright, and death to poor Reynard. However, when the weather is fine, and the ground in good condition, he runs with a courage and confidence, that affords him strong hope of escape of life, and of once more joining the vixen and his cubs.

In order to the true enjoyment of this highly estimated, this first of our national sports, there are very material previous considerations, as we have already hinted in a former plate. In old-

fashioned slang—'to set up without the tools' is a poor and bald affair, in any circumstance of life; and in nothing more, than the arduous undertaking before us. A pretty figure, truly, a man must make in the field, whether he be a haberdasher of hats from Bucklersbury, or the son of a noble duke, who awkwardly bestrides his horse, whose horse was never bred to gallop; or, if it can gallop, has no meat or condition in him! It may be rare fun to the rest of the field, to laugh at such a brother Sportsman, but, with respect to himself, it must, or ought to be, quite a different thing. Uniformity, we think, in Hunting Government, in ceremonies and *slang*, is pleasing; and every knight-companion, for all Fox-hunters are heroes, either by nature or prescription, should be up to the height of *le dernier goût*. His own *togging* should be orthodox and in style; and his saddle, bridle, whip, and spurs equally so. No horse is well adapted to the service of the field that does not carry a saddle well and securely; nor is it well for a hunter to require the martingale. That horse has the best mouth and temper for the hunt that will ride in a plain easy snaffle: and it would be better if all sharp curbs and bits could be banished from the field. Practice at the bar, and at fences, ditches, and any moderate jumps, are good preparation for both the young Sportsman and the young horse; and

it ought to be an invariable maxim with such, to avoid, if possible, all ticklish and dangerous jumps, during the first season or two. Our Artist sets before them the seat for a flying leap at hurdles.

FOX-HUNTING

CHECK

A CHECK!—The hounds, from some cause or other, have lost the scent. That which occurs most frequently is, the fox having made a burst, and finding the hounds gaining upon him, will suddenly stop to a new fence, or, on some convenient opportunity, return upon his foil homewards. This being done suddenly and cunningly, the hounds, eager, and in full cry, unavoidably overrun and lose the scent. The Huntsman, whose business is always to be as near the leading hounds as possible, should, on every occasion of this kind, remain silent and quiet upon his horse, looking around with the utmost circumspection, and attending chiefly to the motions of those hounds on which he knows the greatest dependance can be placed. In the mean time, he is making the best judgment in his power as to his next mode of proceeding. He, with the Whippers-in, now encourage the hounds to spread widely, well knowing the almost unerring instinct

of those, and their ability to recover the scent, should that be possible. So soon as that shall appear hopeless, and not before, the Huntsman must make a cast with the hounds, in order to a fresh scent. This check, should it continue any considerable time, brings all in; excepting, indeed, those unfortunates who have been lost during the burst: or who, not 'knowing their place' in the field, have lost themselves, and might as well have remained at home. Sometimes this occasion presents a fine *coup-d'œil* on the spot—the hounds, the Huntsman, his Chief, and second Whipper-in, surrounded by the whole company, casting about with eager and watchful eye, and impatient for a halloo! from some quarter or other; the horses pricking up their ears, and looking forward, with a congenial anxiety; and the young and inferior dogs, some standing still and mute, others babbling, and all seeming to watch and be governed by the motions of the old and leading hounds, which are still eagerly spreading and hunting the scent. At this point it is, that gentlemen, seasoned to the field, may be materially assistant to the Huntsman, whilst the place of the fresh men is close to those waiting and laying up a fund of experience.

Should the leading hounds appear determined to continue running on the scent, they must be indulged; otherwise, it is the Huntsman's

business to make a cast. It may thus happen, that the hounds may hunt the first fox's foil, or hit upon a fresh scent; or the two circumstances may simultaneously occur, and a 'change of the hunt' take place; in which case much skill is required, in both the Huntsman and his assistants, to prevent a division of the hunt.

FOX HUNTING LEAP

SWISHING AT A RASPER

WE apprehend this phrase—Swishing at a Rasper—to be provincial, and peculiar to a few counties, as in some, we have found it unknown in the hunting stables. The Artist, however, has given a good solution of it. It is easily conceivable, that few cases in the field present more danger, or require more practice and wariness than riding to a leap in company; especially considering the practicability of the leap itself, the proper part to chuse, what is to be found on the other side, and the care which may, or may not prevail, about neck and bones, with our nearest neighbours. We have witnessed several bad accidents in this case, and heard of more. A young man, dashing away, and proud of being in front, rode at a fence, on the other side of which, broken ground, and some timber lying, he either endeavoured to pull up, or the horse refused to leap: at the instant, two gentlemen who followed, rode upon him, and threw

down both him and his horse. He was so severely disabled, that he never entered the field again; and that, which was far more lamentable, he never enjoyed his pristine health.

This leads to the topic of leaping in general, and an important one it no doubt is. Every gentleman, particularly the young ones, will pursue his peculiar bent or inclination, whether that may be for 'riding-a-muck,' if such a phrase be allowable, or neck-or-nothing across the country, without fear of risk; or on a deliberate system, *en Martinet*, and as a qualification for that exquisite exhibition of hardihood and *common sense*, the STEEPLE CHASE. But, according to the very appropriate motto upon the coach doors of a venerable Lady Abbess, of former days, and which was furnished by the celebrated George Hanger, *medio tutissimus ibis;* and, sooth to say, that reasoning holds good in most things, a middle course being generally the safest. Our aspirant then, has the choice of a middle course, or if we may be allowed to moralize to that extent, of a prudent one in riding to hounds. We do not by this intend, at any rate, to advocate a mean, shifting and pusillanimous conduct, of all others, the most out of nature, in hunting, which necessarily implies certain degrees of danger as well as fatigue, and of courage and enterprize in those who aspire to follow it. Our only view is, to

promote these through the medium of a sound discretion, which shall embrace a due regard both for the safety and comfort of the rider and his horse. A Hunter, we do not mean a *Fresh Man*, should never refuse a fair leap, whether at fence, timber, or brook, but as we heartily wish him to enjoy the sport again, we shall not say so much for a dangerous one, which, indeed, he may venture to take *for once, and not to make a practice of it*, should he so please; at the same time, well knowing as he must, in such a case, no disgrace can be incurred by pulling up and dismounting, and should a little time be lost, a limb, a lay-up, and a doctor's bill, may probably be saved.

We are ready to acknowledge that *pulling-up and dismounting* savour strongly of a practice not easy to be complied with in riding to speedy hounds, which induce the necessity upon all those Sportsmen, who are ambitious of being in, of crossing the country with the utmost dispatch. In such a chace, how are the foremost of a company, riding to the fence at all they can do, to have any choice? They who hesitate, must, amid their sage deliberations, be unavoidably ridden down. Such has ever been the risk of hard riding to hounds, and such it must inevitably continue.

There are two old modes of fencing, one of them particularly, coming of late more into use—

Creeping and Screwing. Certainly they present facilities, such as they are, for crossing the most thickly enclosed country. The former is undoubtedly safe and good for practice, where the ditches are wide and deep. The horse is taught to *creep* to the top of the bank, which gives a firm rest for his hinder feet, whence he is enabled to make a spring that will clear the widest ditch. Screwing, is forcing a horse, too often by the utmost severity of whip and spur, not a true sportman-like practice, through the thickest fences of quick, briar, and thorn, without allowing him to jump, should there be no ditch. To a through-bred, or thin-skinned horse, indeed, to any horse, this is an infernally barbarous practice, and never ought to have been revived. The danger, beside, to the eyes, both of man and horse, is evident. The dressing a horse too, afterwards, with the prickles and thorns sticking in his skin, is a torturing operation.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] of covert, a strong [illegible] resolutely on [illegible] caught run, fine forcing [illegible] good country, with [illegible] jumping enough, by way of exercise in that [illegible] ach for both horse and man; a run of ten or [illegible] en miles, and a good field in, to see the [illegible]

[illegible] per-in at their wits' ends; the whole field

FOX-HUNTING—DEATH

WHOO WHOOP!

THE beauty of Fox-hunting is—quickly out of covert, a strong fox, bent resolutely on a straight run; fine forenoon, good country, with fair jumping enough, by way of exercise in that branch for both horse and man; a run of ten or a dozen miles, and a good field in, to see the finish—time to find another fox. Long exhausting runs and dangers incurred and escaped, indeed afford the proud recompense of story and exultation at the festive board, and furnish the diurnal prints with relations generally interesting in this country; but such runs, in the long run, are apt to make very heavy abatements, in both the pleasures and advantages of Fox-hunting. Again—a long day, in cold and drizzling weather, over slippery, hilly, and broken ground; difficult and dangerous fencing; the hounds repeatedly catching a scent, then losing it; and at every cast finding a check; the Huntsman and Whipper-in at their wits' ends; the whole field

straggling about, yawning, working their arms against their sides to pump a little animal heat, and rubbing their fingers; and the horses hanging down their heads, or tossing them about, whilst their coats stand an end, as though they had in view the ghosts of their grandsires and dams—surely the best bred and stoutest Fox-hunter must acknowledge this to be a *damper!*

In a long run, however numerous the field, it seldom happens that many are in to see the death; because that would involve two not extremely common circumstances—namely, many good horses and many capital riders to hounds. Many, in general, never come to the Huntsman's time: he, in course, is in, or ought to be, and whips the dogs off, as soon as they have got a snap, and killed. He then takes the fox up, keeping it for the coming in of the heads of the field, when he sings out the usual dirge over it, cuts off the brush and a foot, sometimes the head, and then throws the carcase to the hounds. The substance of the old and regular ceremony, not observed punctually now-a-days, excepting on grand occasions, as copied from the poet Cowper, once a spectator, by the Rev. Mr. Daniel, in his immortal 'Rural Sports,' is as follows:—The Huntsman, taking up the dead fox with a pitchfork, lodged it on the arm of a tree, about nine feet from the ground, where he left it a

considerable time. During this interval, the Sportsmen sat on their horses, contemplating the dead animal, for which they had toiled so hard; whilst the hounds, assembled at the foot of the tree, with faces not less expressive of the most rational delight, contemplated the same object. The Huntsman, remounted, cut off a foot from Reynard, and threw it to the hounds, which one of them swallowed whole, like a bolus. Alighting again, and drawing down the fox by the hinder legs, he desired the people, who were by this time rather numerous, to open a line for him right and left. He then threw the fox to the distance of some yards, and, *screaming like a fiend*, 'TEAR HIM TO PIECES!' at least ten times repeatedly, the pack obeyed him completely, by devouring the carcase in a few minutes. The author of 'British Field Sports' has moralised on this curious scene, we apprehend, not inapplicably.

RUNNING IN TO A FOX

REYNARD has now done his best; he is out-winded, at last, out-footed, and those fatal ministers of death, the hounds, are at his brush! But he is not of that timid race of animals, the courage of which lies exclusively in the heel and the wind; *his* lies also in the heart, in his savage and pugnacious nature; and, though on his last legs, he scorns to expose his rear, but boldly faces about, notwithstanding the number of his assailants, and, grinning fiercely, shows how well his teeth are prepared to second his resolution, had he a fair and equal chance. Should not the Huntsman, his Attendants, or some of the *élite* of the hunt, arrive in the gods'-speed, the fox, to adopt an old Essex huntsman's choice phraseology, would stand about as good a chance as a cat in hell without claws; he would have a noble funeral, for his corpse would be divided into so many graves, that neither the huntsman, nor the devil himself, if in search, would be able to find a remnant of him, his

valuable brush, perhaps, excepted; though, indeed, the division would not be so minute as in the case of the Huntsman being at hand to whip off the leading hounds, and wait for the coming in of the whole pack.

DIGGING OUT

CAREFUL earth-stopping may prevent the labour of digging out. The first consideration, *Hibernian* or otherwise, in digging out a fox, is, whether or not there be any fox to dig out; for, probably, the suspected earth may contain a rabbit or a badger instead of a fox. And, peradventure, Reynard may not have taken to earth, or may have entered and breathed awhile, and then have left and gone forward. The hounds, or terriers, are the best judges and rules to go by in the case. We trust it has been long out of fashion, to put a dog into the earth, with the view of his drawing the fox; as, instead of effecting that, he will probably come out crippled and disappointed. Indeed, when the diggers have neared the fox so close, that a stick will reach him, and which he will seize, a hound may venture to lay hold on, and draw him. Sometimes pains are taken to *funk* out foxes or

badgers with sulphur. It is of consequence to the success of fox-hunting, to extirpate the badgers from all coverts, as those animals make the strongest earths, and the most troublesome to stop.

FOX-HUNTERS' TOAST

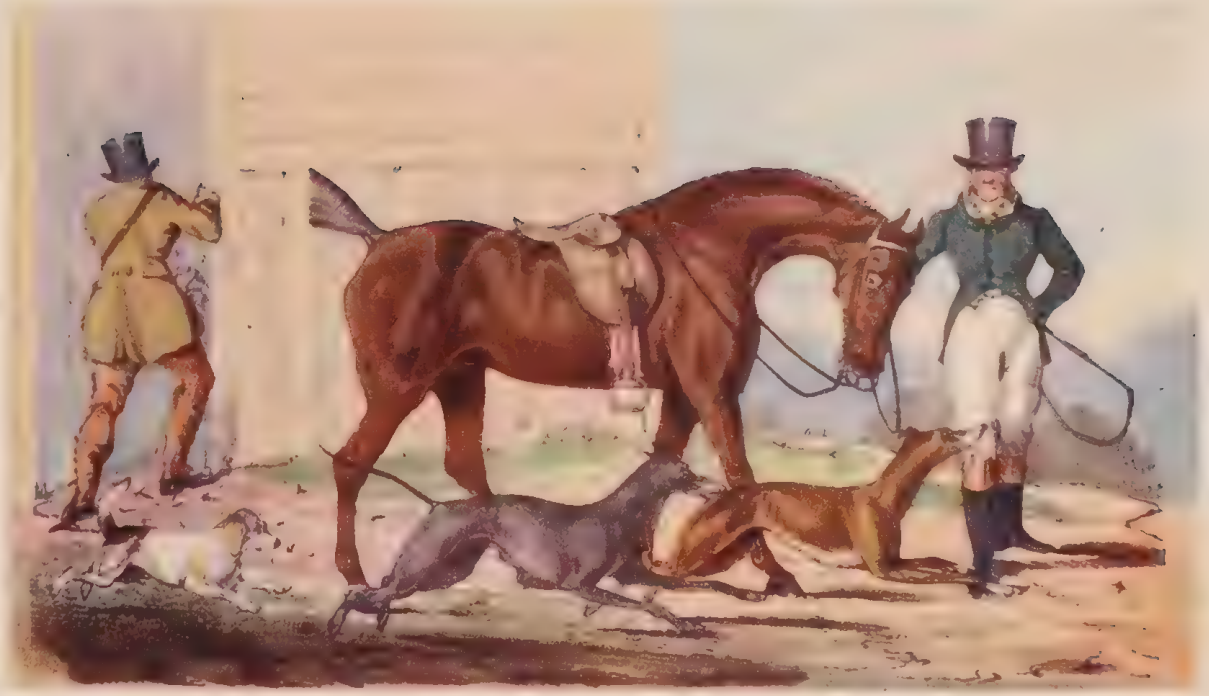
NOW for a View Halloo! of the Sportsmen assembled, and in their proper costume, as from the cheering labours of the day, we will suppose, at the hospitable mansion of the Proprietor of the Pack, and giving, in succession, their favourite toasts, in which, whether first or last, the 'Mother of all Souls' is never forgotten. Distrusting our own imagination, somewhat dull at this moment, we will quote a few cheering lines from a well-known author on this subject. "Now goes round the song of triumph in full chorus—'the traitor is seized on and dies'—until the hospitable and almost responsive walls resound. The happy domestics, those humble friends of generous opulence, recovered from their fatigues, become inspired by the general joy, and instinctively join in the chorus. The song is relieved by pleasing relations of hair-breadth escapes—of the staunchness and speed of the hounds, and the blood and game of the horses; nor is love and beauty, the delight of

true Sportsmen, ever forgotten—old friendships are cemented — new ones cordially formed. Happy, if no acts of unmanly cruelty have passed, to cloud the sunshine of mirth in the bosom of sensibility."

Among the enthusiasts of the field, in a former day, the dinner fully equalled, in its Bacchanalian orgies, the extravaganza of—Tear him to pieces! As at the death, halloos and screams! with the true gestures, and in the real character of maniacs, were vociferated around the table, the most conspicuous ornament of which was, a bowl of first-rate capacity, replenished with strong punch, in which the bloody head of a fox was immersed, and the punch then stirred up with the brush. The whole party were then re-baptised with the dripping brush, and the highly-improved liquor was quaffed by all, with the true *goût* of enthusiastic votaries of the chase. A noble Duke of Northumberland out-Heroded Herod in the affair, actually devouring, at a revel of this kind part of a fox's head devilled! His Grace must have had a good vermin relish.

But, could any thing be urged against these ceremonies on the score of their eccentricity and folly, they at least are not open to any objection in a moral view. So much, cannot be said in favour of Hunting, or indeed of any our Sports in which animals are the objects, the fellow

feelings of which with ourselves, have never been justly and duly considered, perhaps we should say understood. FAIR PLAY AND NO TORTURES ought to be the watch-words of the true Sportsman; and we have, happily, a Society for the protection of animals, patronized by men of high rank and of professional and literary eminence, which will use all their influence, to circulate universally that blessed maxim. Our surgeons and physicians also are publicly declaring against, and reprobating the horrid practice, so general and so disgusting, particularly in France, of dissecting animals alive!



COURSING. PLATE I.

COURSING is the pursuit of the HARE with *greyhounds* or *greyhounds*, the tail, deep-hearted, sharp [illegible] smooth haired hound.

[illegible] a brace or greyhounds are the [illegible] to be slipped or let loose upon a [illegible] are too many, as depriving her of [illegible] sporting character.

COURSING.—PLATE I

GOING OUT

COURSING is the pursuit of the HARE with *greyhounds* or *gazehounds*, the tall, deep-breasted, sharp-nosed, smooth-haired hound, which hunts by the *gaze* or sight, and not on the scent like other hounds. The greyhound is a primitive race, indigenous to the south-eastern countries, where also were originally bred the *courser-horse* or *blood-horse*. In modern English coursing, greyhounds alone are used, or attended by spaniel-finders. By the established laws of coursing, a brace of greyhounds are the proper number to be slipped or let loose upon a hare; a *leash* are too many, as depriving her of her fair sporting chance.

Coursing, in a thickly inclosed country, is generally the pursuit of an animal running small circles, doubling and manœuvring to avoid her pursuers, during which, she is either soon chopped up by one or other of the greyhounds; or, by her cunning and activity, escapes them

and gains a secure retreat. This animal is extremely attached to the place of her birth, and will make her *form*, or resting-place, as near to it as possible; and to this she will constantly return, by the same *meuses* or paths, even after having been chased from it, to the nearest possible risk of life. The hare seldom quits her form in the day time; like most other wild animals, sleeping away the day, and questing for her food during the stillness of the night.

COURSING

FINDING—SOHO!

THE exclamation, Soho! pronounced, by the old coursing yeomanry, Sohow! is a coursing term of long standing, and indicates that Puss has just started into view. The watchful Greyhounds fly forward exultingly at the well-known and welcome sound; the horses prick up their ears; and in a numerous field all are on the *qui vive*. The following rhyming description of the form of a Greyhound, which, to continue sporting our antiquarian lore, was, in the olden time, pronounced *Grune*, however ancient, will never be out of date—the privilege of nature and truth:—

"Headed like a Snake,
Necked like a Drake,
Backed like a Beam,
Sided like a Bream,
Tailed like a Rat,
Footed like a Cat."

The authoress, a celebrated Sporting Writer, in 1481, was Juliana Barnes, since spelled Berners, and sister to Richard Lord Berners; the Suffolk family, we apprehend, whence Berners' Street, London, was named.

It seems a curious proof, that coursing the Hare, however a favourite diversion, is insusceptible of variety, since the mode of conducting it has remained nearly the same, even from the remotest ages. A friend or two, or a company, go out with their Greyhounds and Finders, and beat the likeliest coverts, or grounds, for the game. Coursing on foot, which prevailed much among the yeomanry of former days, indeed within memory, is too fatiguing a sport for us moderns, who almost universally get on horseback on the occasion. On the hare, the speediest of animals, being started, away they go!—No 'hold hard!'—and if they are successful in counteracting the turns and shifts, and manœuvres of cunning Puss, and in compelling her to a straight course, it is a real race to the death. Should the hare sufficiently out-foot the hounds, to have the opportunity, it is wonderful what expedients this timid and distressed animal will have recourse to, in order to self-preservation; and how despair will drive her to extremities, which seem to require a high degree of courage. She has been known to enter

drains, dwellings, outhouses, or lofts, and even to plunge from the cliff into the sea, in order to escape her pursuers. Marsh hares, as the largest, are generally the *stoutest*, or most lasting runners.

COURSING

HILLOO! HILLOO!

HERE we have the proper modern *costume* for a day's Sport at coursing the Hare; the Greyhounds, followed by the Spaniel-finder, bounding from their kennel, in high glee, to greet their beloved master; the noble Horse, in the highest condition, bending his head down, and snuffing his well-known sporting associate the dog. The Hilloo! is the coursing Hark Forward!

The Greyhound, in old English, the *gaze* Hound, so termed as profiting by his eyes, as the Spaniel does by his nose, was known, and in the highest estimation, among the British, probably even in the time of their being under the dominion of ancient Rome. He was always a courtier, and great favourite among the ladies, as appears by the following curious anecdote collected by the Rev. Mr. Daniel, and published in his justly celebrated 'Rural Sports:'—"The wife of Robert Bruce, King of Scotland, when a

prisoner to Edward I. A.D. 1304, had three men and three women servants, three greyhounds, plenty of game and fish, and the fairest house in the manor: she had, beside, the following convenient attendant allowed her;—a foot boy, sober, and not *riotous*, to make her bed."

Within the last fifty or sixty years, the old coarse breed of Greyhounds has gradually disappeared, and they have been bred entirely for fineness, symmetry and speed; being assimilated, as nearly as possible, to the race horse, their rival in that qualification. We had formerly a trial of speed over the course at Doncaster, between a racing mare and a greyhound, the mare winning but by a head. The mare, matched for one hundred guineas, started alone, and had gallopped a mile, when a greyhound-bitch joined her, and ran with her head to head, the remaining three miles, the jockey favouring the play, and the mare showing the usual emulation. Betting at the distance-post, five to four on the bitch. A celebrated veterinary and sporting writer, thus describes this species:—Fine greyhounds have, like fine horses, a general proportion, a certain elegance of parts, length, and are full of muscles, and their hocks are let down to the ground behind, and stand from them; and so supply the want of a long pastern; their feet or toes are made longer than those of any other

dogs that can be named: to this may be added, their loins or fillets, are more conspicuously broad and muscular, conferring on them great power for speedy exertion. A fine skin with soft thin hair, are deemed characteristic of the highest blood in the modern greyhound; and the *crack* colours have been, during some years, *black, blue,* or a mixture of those. Whether this fineness in the modern breed, has resulted from a cross with the delicate, but useless Italian greyhound, has not hitherto been ascertained. Our Coursers of the old school, hold that, in Greyhounds, goodness is, in general, derived from the bitch, a notion which must not be taken for gospel, though, perhaps, bitches generally have most speed. The lighest whelps, and those which show length and bone, and particularly the broadest muscular expansion of the thigh, are esteemed of the greatest promise. In order to rear a well-bred and thorough-shaped Greyhound, to the highest excellence, he ought not to be entered to game until the fifteenth or eighteenth month; but twelve, and even ten months old, with bitches, is a more common period. In coursing an open country, an actual race of half-a-dozen miles sometimes occurs, at the top of the speed of the animals engaged, when Puss is fairly run to death, and the horses and dogs to a stand-still.

COURSING.—PLATE IV

PICKING UP

OVER downs (as exhibited in the Plate), and marshes, Coursing is a different and more arduous pursuit; and a course, or rather *burst*, of six or seven miles at length, and such may happen when the subtlety of the hare convinces her that her safety lies rather in her speed than in her manœuvres, will be sufficient to try the game as well as the speed of the best-bred horses and dogs. To a straight course like this, it is the first object of the Sportsman to compel the hare by every means in his power; to baffle her attempts to double and turn, and to obtain as long a run in view as shall be possible. Such has sometimes been the ardour of pursuit in the greyhound, that he has expired the instant of the completion of his success; and in one recorded instance, with the hare in his mouth, poor puss taking advantage of her pursuer's misfortune, and making her escape from his death-stricken jaws.

The great English *Coursing-Meetings,* and *matches* with the greyhounds, are held annually at *Newmarket, Swaffham* in *Norfolk,* and *Flixton* in *Yorkshire.* These, attended by hundreds of Sportsmen, mounted on the best-bred hunters, are conducted according to the old-established laws of coursing, handed down to us from the reign of *Elizabeth,* the great patroness of the chase. In those days, deer also were coursed by the greyhound, a practice not in modern use, excepting on particular occasions in parks.

COURSING.—PLATE V

DEATH OF THE HARE

THE present Plate exhibits the completion of the COURSE; and the greyhounds casting their eager regards towards the object, which natural instinct has taught them to pursue. Grave philosophers have affected to smile, and to treat with derision, a scene like this,—the expense of men and horses, the labour and exertion, exclusive of the risk of breaking a neck, and all for what—why, truly, to obtain the carcase and skin of a miserable animal, not intrinsically worth half-a-crown! Whilst tender-hearted philanthropists exclaim at the cowardice, barbarism, and cruelty of chasing and harrassing a timid animal, which offends or injures no living creature, and the dying screams of which resemble those of the infant!—an animal, too, which may always be obtained by the more merciful, easy, and quick operation of the gun.

With the latter class of reasoners, we shall not enter the lists; but with respect to field sports

generally, it is not the mere worth of the animal chased, singly considered, which can decide the question, since various other considerations, and those of no slight moment, inevitably interpose : the natural impulse of man, as well as of animals, from the creation, towards the chase ; and, in the uncivilized state, its absolute necessity. The arguments for its high gratification to those who possess leisure and wealth, more especially in land, and for its undisputed conduciveness to health and hilarity, will ever prove decisive.

COURSING

GOING HOME

THE sporting labours of the day being successfully finished, our steady Courser, upon his equally steady and well-trained nag, is proceeding homeward, with that leisure which the exertion, just past, has rendered both desirable and necessary. The horse will thus cool himself in reaching the stable. The Course, however, seems not to have been a hard one, from the vigour and mettle displayed by the dogs in their way home. These things considered, we are treated with the view of a good comfortable lot of game, and impressed with the idea of a country well stocked with hares. The servant, with Puss slung across his shoulder, puts the present writer forcibly in mind of a circumstance which occurred to him at eight years of age, in Suffolk, from which he suffered an excess of fatigue, always recollected with a smile. Early in the shooting season, in warm, muggy weather, and over very heavy

land, he went out with an old uncle, and without any attendant. The birds had probably been much disturbed, would not lie, nor was it possible to get near enough to them to make it worth while to draw a trigger. On the point of returning home empty handed, a hare started; old Square-Toes, on the alert, fired and killed. Instead of popping it into his bag, or slinging it across his own shoulder, the old gentleman threw it across the shoulder of his hopeful nephew. It was a swinging old jack-hare, and we had three miles home, chiefly across ploughed land, and over sundry gates, styles, and gaps. The reader will not wonder that a little eight-year-old Sportsman was at all he could do to get through a course like this with credit. Though fatigued to the utmost, and shifting the load from side to side, he was ashamed to complain, and arrived at the mansion in a state of perspiration, similar to that of a racer that had run a five-mile sweat under the heaviest allowance of clothes.

Coursing the Hare, a favourite diversion in England through several past centuries, is always performed with greyhounds, an original species of the dog, and of high antiquity. The modern species, however, has varied considerably from the ancient, which was a much stouter, more rough, and more courageous animal; and, in all

probability, not equal in speed, the great characteristic of the greyhound of the present time. In the early ages, this species was used in hunting the wild boar and the wolf by our ancestors. The ancient Greeks, indeed, coursed the hare with gazehounds, or greyhounds, and they are, in modern times, confined exclusively to that sport. To course fairly, and in a sportsmanlike style, a brace of greyhounds only, should be slipped to a hare; and the chief maxim in coursing is, when the dogs have found, for the partakers of the sport to be so distributed and disposed, that the hare may be baulked in her usual attempts to turn, and compelled to a straight course, that as long a run as possible, and as full a view, may be obtained. The annual splendid and numerously attended Coursing Meetings, fully demonstrate the high estimation in which the Sport is held.

SHOOTING

GOING OUT

THE Artist presents to our view a general outline of the "Going Out" for a Day's Shooting; exhibiting the Sportsman and Attendant, the Dogs, the Horse, all in the appropriate *costume* of the day. Shooting, to do the thing with ardour and perseverance, particularly over a heavy country, is, at no rate a fit amusement for a milksop, but requires some roughness of constitution; and even the most robust, in a long day, will appreciate the convenience of having a nag at hand, to rest their wearied loins and joints: some shooters prefer riding the day throughout. The Shooting Horse, then, as an object of importance, merits particular consideration: In the first place, for convenience sake, he should be of the galloway size, at any rate not above fourteen hands in height; perfectly *quiet*, and master of his *business*, that is to say, steady to shot—to be shot from; able to jump any moderate fence or ditch, and expert

at brushing through any gap in his way: a good walker and canterer, and safe on his legs: if he will follow, and lead through a copse or wood, handily, the sum of his perfection will be nearly complete.

A complete Sportsman makes assurance double sure, by a provision of the necessary *materiel*, for every possible purpose, and to meet every probable contingency. Clothing demands a first consideration, in our moist and fickle climate, so abundant in the blessings of cold and rheumatism; the latter too well known affection, so affectionately attached as to stick close to a man throughout life. In all our field sports, the head, throat, and feet, should be amply defended, the legs and feet by good firm leather and water-proof soles: nor will the keen air permit the *inside* to be neglected; and, after a few hours' excursion, belly-timber will not fail to be the most valuable timber in view, however woody the country. A piece of hung-beef, corned pork, or any *solid*, will then prove a stomach jewel, and the more bright for being washed with a draught from the bottle of sound beer: an occasional recourse, also, to the *liqueur*-bottle, in a cold and foggy air, will prove, in the Turf phrase, a good hedge.

The prime subject of the Gun has filled volumes: and no wonder, since the invention of that fatal black powder wrought so great a

change in human affairs. Among the rest, it gave a vast facility to our dominion over the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air; and the enjoyment of its exercise, which, independently of its utility, or rather, necessity, has been from the earliest age deemed a sport. In the choice of a gun, whether a single or double barrel be preferred, there are two paramount considerations—the FIRST, its being trustworthy; for life and limb are intrusted to its soundness; and he is not fit to be trusted with such a fatal implement, who has not, in his mind's eye, the deplorable accidents which so perpetually occur; and the *second*, the price he is disposed, or can afford to encounter. The marks of proof, it is true, are found upon every barrel exposed to sale, which, nevertheless, is no absolute security that they shall never burst, since, that dreadful accidents have happened to so many of high price, and even from the *crack* makers. A careful purchaser may then satisfy himself, by having the gun he has chosen tried, and if he be very scrupulous, and in London, he may have this process put in force, by fire and water, or at the Target, at Baker's, in Whitechapel Road; or, he may have the common trial at any gunsmith's. As to the price, it is at his own option, how much he may chuse to pay for fashion, taking this with him; the goodness and effectiveness

of a piece, do not always depend on either fashion, maker, or price; "for a good gun is a good gun, whether it cost one hundred guineas, or three pounds ten shillings."—Lightness, with sufficient substance, are next to be considered; and also length, the most convenient degree of which, for partridge and common field-shooting, was formerly supposed to be about three feet in the barrel, a length, which present fashion has reduced several inches. These light pieces are certainly most convenient, in a thick and wood country, and in a long day. The most useful colour for a gun barrel is brown; the real goodness of a LOCK, fashionable or common, depends on the medium impressed on its springs, between too great stiffness, and too much readiness in being moved. The same of the trigger. Some persons, from habit or otherwise, are curious as to the length and form of their GUN-STOCK. This, however, should always be sufficiently long, as, in case of the accidental bursting of a barrel, the danger may thence be probably reduced. The BALANCE also of the piece has its due consequence, and there should always be sufficient weight at the shoulder; since, should the butt-end be overloaded, or, as the Old Sportsmen term it, should the peice be 'butt-heavy,' not only will the weight tell in a long day, but the aim will fail of a portion of its due correctness.

POINTERS

A POINTER is merely a pointing-*hound;* but although, probably, any hound might be taught to point, or *set* the game, there may be a variety of the hound, which are natural pointers. This seems to be the case. There is a *hiatus,* however *non valde deflendus,* in our sporting records, respecting this variety of the hound. For we are quite in the dark, as to the period at which he was introduced into this country, where, in former days, the Setter or Setting-Spaniel was in use for similar purposes. It might, probably, be nearly or somewhat subsequent to the Revolution. It is agreed that we obtained the Pointer from *Spain,* as the *Spanish* pointer is first noticed in our sporting annals, a dog much resembling the old *Southern* hound, in head, ear, exquisite fineness of nose, and general heaviness. This original pointer has been since crossed with the modern English fox-hound, thereby giving him superior lightness, elegance of form, and speed, but detracting from his olfactory powers.

Very few, or none, of the true *Spanish* breed remain in this country, but many which strongly resemble them, as having been slightly crossed: the Pointer also has been frequently crossed with the Setter; indeed, crossing has been interchangeable between those rival breeds.

The purposes to which the gunner applies his Pointer are to *find* and *point* the game; and also, particularly in the absence of the Spaniel, to find and bring in the dead or wounded game. In order to the due performance of this last duty, the dog must be trained to have a tender mouth, and great carefulness, that the feather of the game be as little broken as possible, and the flesh as little bruised and torn. Some Sportsmen contend that neither Spaniel nor Pointer should be suffered to intermeddle in this affair; in which case, the duty of finding, however difficult and fatiguing, must devolve upon their servants or themselves.

Of all sporting-dogs, the Pointer is the most difficult to train, not only as being void of that ductility of disposition by which some other species are distinguished, but that his lessons are more numerous and tedious, and requiring a greater share of sagacity and heed. To complete his education, he must be made staunch to 'bird, dog, and gun,'—to *back* his partner—to *quarter* his ground thoroughly and honestly,—to know

his place, and to yield a steady obedience. A stately, high-ranging Pointer, endowed with these qualifications, is a valuable property to any gentleman attached to the sports of the field. Pointers and Setters may be used indiscriminately for the same purposes; but the former are chiefly employed in Partridge and Pheasant-shooting: in the pursuit of *moor*-game, the Setter, as the most hardy, is now universally preferred. The price of a good Pointer is about twenty to twenty-five guineas; but some individuals of this species, endowed with very high qualifications, have obtained for their owners proportionate prices, of which, Colonel Thornton's famous *Dash* is a well-known example. Dash was sold for between two and three hundred pounds, in wine and other property.

SETTERS

THE SETTER is an old English variety of the shooting Dog, which has been in sporting use between two and three centuries. He was doubtless, originally a long-flewed Spaniel, taught to find, and then to *set* or mark the game for the net or gun, as the Pointer has been since trained to *stand*, or point it. The setter of the present day, long since universally crossed with the Pointer, the two breeds having indeed been mutually intermixed, is correctly delineated in the annexed Plate. He is lower in stature than the Pointer, but of considerable length, his coat generally *sheeted* with brown, or liver-colour and white, with his long ears, tail, quarter, and legs *feathered*. It has been remarked that this breed is deficient in substance upon the loins; they, however, resemble in that respect the Spaniel, from which they are descended, and evince no weakness in consequence, being among the *stoutest*, which is to say, most *lasting* of sporting dogs.

This dog is endowed by nature, in an eminent degree, with all the attractions of the Spaniel, —sagacity, affection for man, and a pleasing docility. — He is the successful rival of his kinsman the Pointer, and preferred upon the moors, and in thick covert-shooting, for his unceasing activity, spirit, and hardiness, which never desert him in the longest day; his narrow, hard, and hairy feet fearing no kind of ground, and his coat defying the closest covers. The Pointer is, nevertheless, his superior for stately figure, high ranging, a deep rate, and, generally, steadiness. Setters, it should seem, have been always in high estimation in Ireland, from the vast prices recorded to have been given for them in that country, even to the extent of exchanging a considerable estate in land for a single dog of this breed! In this country, they have never attained those extraordinary prices which have been lavished for Pointers; and in several sales, in the last Autumn, at Tattersall's, Setters were sold at the hammer, at from two to ten guineas each. The Setter is liable to the offensive discharge from the ears common to most Spaniels, but which does not appear in dogs kept in good condition, until the approach of old age and debility.

GROUSE-SHOOTING

THE Season for shooting *red game*, or GROUSE, commences on the 12th of August, and ends on the 10th of December. For *black Grouse*, from August 20th to December 10th. In the *New Forest*, *Hants*, and in the counties of *Somerset* and *Devon*, black game, or heath-fowl, may be taken between December 10th and September 1st. The possession of either of these species of game, at any other time than as above stated, incurs a forfeiture of ten pounds for each offence.

Shooting the red Grouse forms the subject of the opposite Plate. These birds, red or black, are in the form of, but larger than, the partridge. The black Grouse are considerably the largest, some of them weighing upwards of four pounds. They perch on trees, like the pheasant. Grouse-shooting has long been a favourite and prevailing sport, and the game itself is equally a favourite at the best tables. The birds are easily capable of domestication.

The head *rendezvous* for shooting the Grouse, are the *Scots* and *Welsh* moors and mountains; in general, the *moors* and *wolds* of the *west* and *north* of *England*. The nearest places for this sport, to the metropolis, are the *New Forest, Hants*, and, perhaps, some parts of *Sussex*. The pursuit of moor-game is not to be classed with those gentle exercises which afford gratification, without fatigue to the Sportsman; on the contrary, it is one of the most laborious and fatiguing exertions which can be taken with the gun; and, indeed, is practised by those ardent votaries alone, who, in pursuit of their favourite diversion, are intimidated neither by long journeys perhaps in the first instance, nor by long walks or rides, beneath a burning sun, over moor, mountain, and bog, and in the roughest ways which matted heath, loose stones, concealed cavities in the earth, and obstructions of all kinds can produce.

A deep-flewed Setter of the old breed, is the dog to be preferred to all others for the moors, as the most hardy and active, and likely best to stand the labour. For the stoutest of such, however, half-a-day of Grouse-shooting, more especially in the early part of the season, is quite sufficient, and a relay of dogs in proportion is therefore necessary. The Sportman's attire ought to be the lightest possible over flannel

shirt and drawers, the feet and legs being substantially defended. A shooting-horse, accustomed to the country, is a great convenience. Great caution is necessary with respect to drinking water, or too cooling liquors, in a state of perspiration; and in the management of the gun, lest a sudden fall occasion some fatal accident.

Grouse lie best in fine weather, and may, in the early season, be followed from eight o'clock in the morning, as long as day-light lasts, provided the stamina and inclination of the gunner last also. A good refreshment at mid-day will forward this. Late in the Autumn, from ten to two or three o'clock, is the longest shooting-day. Large shot, and the heaviest gun a man can conveniently carry, will then be found most effective, as the birds will run to a great distance. Sportsmen generally try to kill the old cock, which runs cackling away, in order to deceive and lead the pursuers from the brood. The cock being dead, the pack will lie until the dogs run upon them.

PARTRIDGE-SHOOTING

THE season for PARTRIDGE-SHOOTING commences *September* 1st, and finishes on the 1st of *February*.

There are several varieties of the Partridge species in the British Isles, and in Ireland. The chief of them, and the most numerous, are the common indigenous grey birds, and the red-legged kind, which have been introduced from *France*, and which are found in *Norfolk* and *Suffolk*. These occasionally alight and roost on trees, the common variety never. Farther mixtures have resulted from these, throwing uncommon colours. By Sporting usage, Partridges are styled *birds*, and notwithstanding their great plenty, they have ever maintained their rank at the best tables as a delicacy.

The form and plumage of these birds are soft and beautiful; and, like the Pheasant, they may be domesticated, and the breed increased in any requisite degree. They *pack* or assemble, and pair, early in the Spring, unless prevented by

severe frost, beginning to lay in six or seven weeks after pairing; and from a numerous nest of eggs, amounting in some instances to upwards of thirty, produce generally one-third more of cocks than hens, which circumstance is afterwards the occasion of so many fatal battles among the cocks, from their competition for the too limited number of females. Hence the necessity in preserves, of reducing the number of cocks, sometimes by netting them. The breed, however, is liable to a number of casualties, by which it is greatly reduced in some seasons, as in the two opposite extremes of wet and drought. Great numbers also of the eggs and young birds are annually destroyed by field-vermin and birds of prey. The Partridge sits twenty-one days, and in a good season broods early enough in June for the young birds to fly within the same month.

The Partridge, like the Pheasant, feeds during the Summer-season in the corn-fields, and is to be found, during the Winter, in the turnips, and in *brakes*, and in other coverts. The pointer and setter, with or without spaniels, are the dogs appropriate to this game; and a brace, or a leash of the former, are a very handsome attendance for two or three shooters. According to the rules of Sporting, not always so well observed as is necessary, by hot-headed juvenile gunners, every one should wait patiently for his own bird,

when they rise singly, rising on his own side. A bird rising between two gunners may be, in course, shot at by both. When the covey, being flushed, rises together, every gunner should mark a bird, and watch its fall; but it is held unfair to 'flank the covey,' or fire into the thickest of them, without aiming at a particular bird. One great object, never to be neglected by shooters in company, is to BEWARE OF ACCIDENTS.

PHEASANT SHOOTING.

PHEASANT-SHOOTING

PHEASANT-SHOOTING commences on the 1st of *October*, and ends on the 1st of *February*. The possession of either Pheasants or Partridges at any other time, such excepted as are kept in mews for breeding, incurs the forfeiture of five pounds for every bird, by the Game Laws of England.

The counties of *Suffolk* and *Norfolk* are supposed to afford the best Pheasant-shooting, their coverts and preserves breeding an immense stock. These beautiful birds lie upon the corn and stubbles, and in the adjoining coverts whilst any corn remains abroad for their support. Their feeding-times are morning and evening. In the Winter season, their food consists of wild berries, and being carnivorous, they not only prey upon insects and reptiles, but upon any dead animal or carrion which falls in their way.

Furze coverts are the favourite resort and shelter of the Pheasant, which also delights in the opposite situations of springy and boggy soils,

where the willow, and other aquatics, are found in clumps. They also attach themselves to the salt-marshes, when they can find covert in the neighbourhood; and in any of the above situations, if fed and attended, will make a wonderful increase; at the same time, they are not given to stray, or take distant flights, although constantly alarmed by the gun. The covert of woods, however, seems necessary to Pheasants in the Winter season, and they generally choose the large middle branches of the oak upon which to roost. Whilst flying up to perch, at sunset, the Pheasant-cock crows three or four times, which is answered by the hen, in her ascent, with a single shrill cry.

The provident Sportsman, by ancient custom, spares the Hen Pheasant, and thins the cocks. With respect to the dogs most proper for this branch of sport, in woods and difficult coverts, the strongest and best spaniels, which are fearless, and able to thread the thicket, however close and thorny, undoubtedly deserve the preference; and a good cry of them, the fuller of tongue the better, will be found of the greatest use, as well as most pleasant and cheering, in extensive woods. Newfoundland-dogs have been trained with success to wood-shooting of Pheasants, but neither those, pointers or setters, can do the business of spaniels in a thick covert.

It requires experience in the shooter to take a correct aim at the Pheasant when sprung among the trees, and he should recollect instantly to wheel to the right or left, when his aim may be obstructed by an intervening tree. Pheasants also, like Partridges, which know the gun, instead of springing, will run, and suffer themselves to be pursued by the dogs; another respect in which the active and babbling spaniel is of use. In the early season especially, and whilst the leaves remain upon the trees, the Pheasant-shooter must not be too late in the morning, because the game then lies too high to be easily found; nor must the Sportsman be too delicate, either with respect to his person or his clothes, both of which may acquire the honour of some wounds.

'Thus through the yielding woods I drive along,
With various fortune. Oft the whirring bird
Eludes my threaten'd aim; or makes escape
From the fast following shot, by numerous boughs
Half intercepted: oft the unwelcome hen,
Secure from danger of the sounding gun,
Rises before me. But enough for me
The spoils I gain.'

VINCENT'S FOWLING.

FOWL SHOOTING

THIS *Sport*, or rather *useful occupation*, since it affords a considerable, as well as luxurious addition to the public stock of provision, is, in course, practised upon the sea-coasts, upon the large rivers or estuaries, in those marshy and flooded districts called *fens;* and, in general, wherever are found extensive pieces of water, with margins or borders presenting the proper shelter of reeds, rushes, and aquatic vegetation. The eastern and western coasts of England are famous for this diversion, and the chief fen-districts are those of Cambridge, the Isle of Ely, Rutland, and Lincoln.

The aquatic fowls may be simply classed as *swimmers*, and *divers*, and *waders*, the former living upon the water, the latter upon its margin, never swimming, but wading with their long legs, and thrusting their long necks and bills to the bottom in search of their prey. The principal aquatic fowls, and which are usually to be found in the markets of the metropolis, are—the *Duck*

and *Mallard* — *Dunbird* — *Easterling* — *Wigeon*— *Teal*—*Plover* and *Bittern*. *Wild-geese*, the largest of aquatic fowls, are seldom eaten, the flesh being coarse, oily, and tasting strongly of fish: but the young broods, often taken in the fens, are easily domesticated; and being corn-fed, their flesh proves superior in flavour to that of the common goose.

The methods of taking Wild-fowl are various, that of the *decoy-ponds* being the most wholesale and considerable; and upon which the chief dependence is placed for the supply of the markets. These ponds, situate near the sea or large rivers, are provided with decoy-fowl, for the purpose of enticing the wild ones; which, alighting in flocks, are driven with the help of trained dogs, into the netted creeks, ditches, or pipes of the ponds, where, being prevented from flight by the nets above them, they are easily taken. In successful seasons, a decoy-pond is a very valuable estate.

Other methods are, the use of *punts* or *canoes*, a branch of the sport perhaps no where so much practised among us, as on the coast of *Hants*. Some of these boats carry a swivel or stanchion-gun, of great length and calibre, a successful discharge from which will bring down two or three score, and upwards, of the largest fowl. This being generally a night-employment, it is

obvious that a great number of the fowl, only wounded, must escape the most diligent search of the fowler and his dogs; and it is wonderful to observe the cunning and activity of the *gulls*, and other sea-birds of prey, in attacking and devouring the wounded fowl; thereby forwarding nature's universal expedient, but merciless plan—*eat and be eaten.*

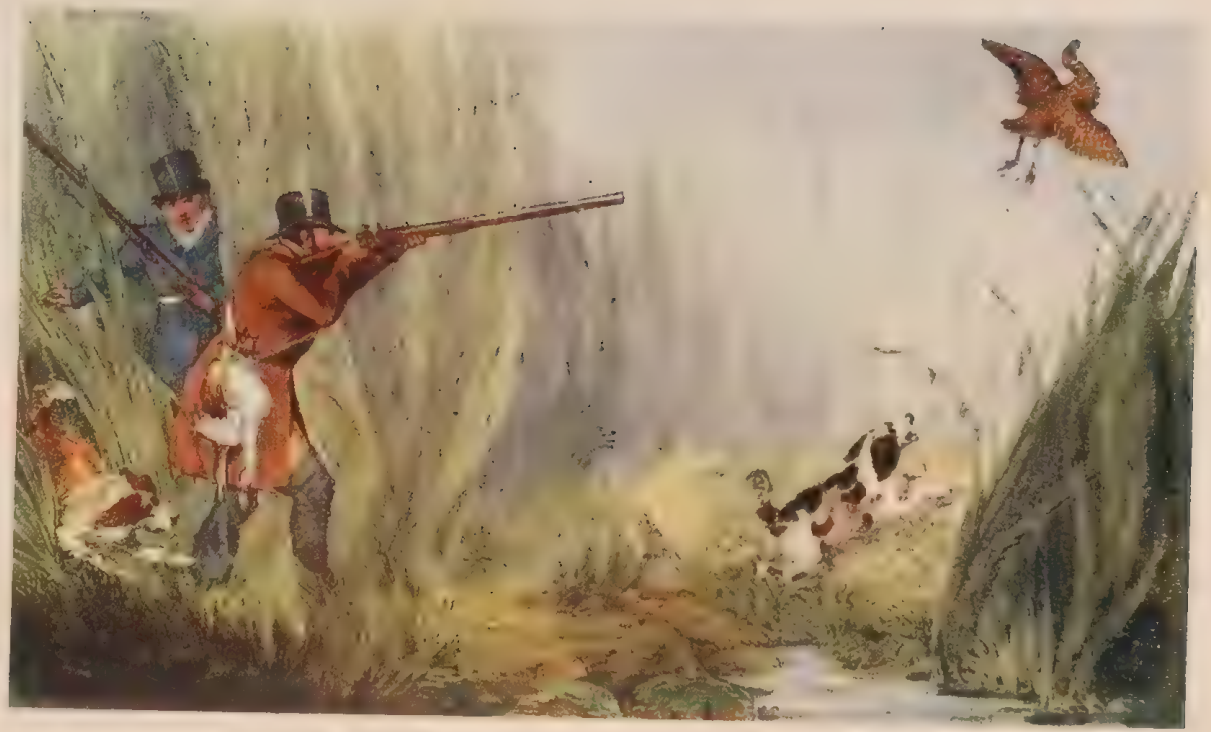
Some fowlers venture upon the ooze, with mud-shoes, or pattens, in order to approach, or wait for the birds. Others sink an old cask upon the shore, in which they watch their game, unseen and unsuspected, the upper part of the cask being left sufficiently above-ground, to admit of firing a gun through a loop-hole. The plate before us represents a shot obtained from the gunners *stalking* along the shore; this is still more certain where the sea or river is bounded by a *wall* bank. The seasons for wild-fowl-shooting are both Winter and Summer, both night and day; the night-work being most perilous and laborious, adapted solely to those who make a profit or livelihood by it, and to a few of the gallant description of enthusiastic *amateurs*. *Colonel Hawker's* book is the best authority on this subject. Any shooter may take a day's successful amusement at this sport with a common fowling-piece; but if he do not mind a little extra weight, or dread a somewhat heavier recoil

upon his shoulder, he will find his purpose far better answered by the real duck-gun ; the barrel being never less than *three feet eight inches in length, nor more than four feet four inches,* the stock having the proper curve. A charge for this gun will contain a sufficient number of the larger shot, and execution will be generally done at the distance of upwards of fourscore yards.

SNIPE SHOOTING

SNIPES are to be found in most countries, and are bred in considerable numbers in some parts of this, although, perhaps, the greater part migrate with the woodcock. They are found generally in rushes, bottoms, and upon fen and moor-land, and in the Winter-seasons near springs not frozen. Some take this sport without the assistance of any dog; but generally cocking-spaniels, setters, or steady pointers, are used. Snipe-shooting is a test of the marksman's skill, and excellence at this sport serves to complete his qualification. These birds lie best in windy weather, indeed will lie until nearly under the gunner's feet. Being upon their walks, it is usual to go silently down wind first of all, to beat up the most wild ones; then let go a pointer up wind, to find those which have laid close. When a Snipe is flushed, mark, as it *hangs* against the wind. But no writer has given more practical or satisfactory directions, brief, however, for Snipe-shooting, than the experienced *Colonel Hawker.*

The Colonel says,—if you flush them nearly under your feet, remain perfectly unconcerned, until they have done twisting in their flight; then fire; or take them whilst describing the semicircle, which sometimes gives an opportunity; but if you present in haste (see the Plate), you cannot, from a common panic, bring the gun up to a proper aim. If they rise at a moderate distance, *down with them before they begin their evolutions.* When they cross, fire well forward. Endeavour to get to windward of them, and catch a cross shot, by which you will not be so embarrassed by their zig-zag flight.



BITTERN-SHOOTING

IT is said there are two varieties of the BITTERN, the *common* and the *little* Bittern; but there appears to be no other distinction than that of size, the qualities of both varieties being perfectly similar. This is a *fen*-bird, of considerable resemblance and similar habits to the *Heron*, but somewhat smaller; leading a solitary life in the fens and marshes, and among the reeds and flags on the borders of rivers, as represented in the Plate. Both the Heron and Bittern, in former days, were brought to table, but the superiority of quality in the flesh of the latter is striking, considering the resemblance of the birds, and their use of the same kind of food. The flesh of the Bittern has no fishy taste, but is of a high flavour, generally esteemed superior to that of the hare. The Bittern always figured as a capital dish at our old English feasts; subsequently with the peacock and curlew, losing the ground of fashionable choice, which, however, the Bittern has regained, having been for many years in high estimation,

and generally to be seen at the London poulterers, whose charge for this bird is from half-a-guinea to fifteen shillings, according to the size.

The Bittern is a common European aquatic bird, and breeds in this country. It nests in April, amongst reeds and rushes, the hen laying four, sometimes six, eggs of a pale ash-colour, shaded with green; she sits twenty-five days, and afterwards, with the cock, feeds their naked, leggy, and long-necked brood, upon small fish, frogs, slugs, and insects, during nearly as long a period, before they are able to shift for themselves. The birds of prey, which are accustomed to commit great depredations in the nests of water-fowl, never venture to attack those of the Bittern, one of the most courageous of birds. The Bittern, like the Heron, is strongly attached to some particular and secluded spot, where they will continue in solitary pairs for a length of time, unless disturbed by the fowler. In the Autumn and Winter seasons, these birds retire to the nearest woods; if the woods are distant, they take their journey by night, commencing at sun-set, by soaring aloft in a spiral ascent, until lost to the eye which watches them, always whilst mounting, making a cry which it would be difficult to describe. In this Autumnal retreat, they are known chiefly to feed upon mice, those animals being often taken whole from their

stomachs, and on this provision they become very fat. In the Spring, and during the breeding-season, the male Bittern makes a deep, hollow, *lowing* noise, during the morning and evening. This will be a signal to the gunner; but, with the view of increasing and preserving the breed, may be taken as a note indicating forbearance. It being ascertained in the evening, that is, at flight-time, that Bitterns are in the neighbourhood, they may be hunted with Spaniels in the morning, in their well-known retreats, where they will sometimes lie exceedingly close; and at others, as the present writer has experienced, be equally shy. This bird is a heavy flyer, and a large mark, but will carry away a great deal of shot, and when dropped from a wound only, is dangerous to approach, fighting like a hawk, with its bill and claws. The male Bittern is the largest, and is sometimes nearly a yard in length. Their plumage is handsomely variegated, the ground yellow, marked with numerous zig-zag lines of black. The head-feathers are long, those of the neck loose and waving.

BANK SHOOTING FOR FOWL

THIS is a good representation of a Sport which the present writer has often pursued. We have the Gunners, attended by their Water Spaniels, lying in wait under a hill, as they usually also do under the marsh, or sea wall, for the rising of the fowl, in expectation of getting a shot. The dogs, both from nature and training, vigilant, and equally anxious with their masters, are ready to start at the discharge of a gun, and bring in the dead or wounded fowl. For wild fowl shooting, the guns in use are necessarily of considerable length of barrel and large calibre, as they must be expected to do execution at long distances, and to carry a spreading charge of large shot. A man ought to have some considerable strength of arm, and firmness of body and nerve, to use these pieces with effect; and some are in use which, being too long and heavy for any man to present, recourse is had to a rest, or *bumper*, as it is provincially termed, usually a stick of wood, with a cross at top, on which to rest the gun.

These guns carry a vast charge of shot, and sometimes bring down an almost incredible number of fowl at a shoot. We have heard of a man in Suffolk dropping thirty-two wild geese at a shot. We have also known a thing, one would suppose equally wonderful—some few gentlemen, from an enthusiasm for this Sport, pass whole nights in the marshes, and on the small inlets near the ocean, in the most severe heart-chilling and rheumatising season. The sorts of fowl chiefly in pursuit are duck and mallard, dun-birds, wigeon, easterling, and a few others. With respect to those men who pursue this game for a livelihood, they ought to be the most hardy and robust of the species; and whatever profit they may obtain, they truly earn it dear enough. From the decoys, which are in favourable seasons very profitable, and the labour of these men, our tables are supplied with wild fowl, and generally in sufficient plenty. Newfoundland dogs, where they can be obtained, have been, of late years, used in this sport; and, it may be presumed, are to be preferred to all others for wild fowl shooting.

PUNTING FOR FOWL

ALL the world has seen and admired 'Patience in a Punt,' the work, as we recollect, of that facetious and celebrated amateur caricaturist, the late H. Bunbury, Esq. whose drawings, provoking irresistible laughter, adorn some of the rooms of Barton Hall, in Suffolk, we believe the house of his birth. But the punting, in our eye, is not in pursuit of fish, but of fowl, nevertheless requiring equal *patience* and phlegm; and incurring far greater hardship and danger. The punt, in the eastern counties, usually called a *flat*, is a flat-bottomed boat, which, drawing only an inch or two of water, will float along the creeks of the marshes, or over the ouze in the great rivers or estuaries; enabling the gunner silently to approach the fowl, within shot, at their feeding-places; or to watch and get a shot at them as they fly over. Beside the great gun, fixed on the staunchion, it is proper to have other pieces ready loaded; and in a favourable season several dogs may be employed. We were, in our youth, near

the sea in Suffolk, much attached to this sport by day, but always begged to be excused by *night*; having a regard for number one, and a correct view of the balance between pleasure and pain, somewhat above our years. A caution is necessary against overloading the punt, as we recollect the circumstance of one having two men on board, being overset, fortunately, as it happened in the day time. Flats are not the proper embarkations for those hardy fowlers, who venture on the ocean, or even on great estuaries. The present writer with another young aspirant, attended by a seaman, ran over Harwich harbour to Landguard fort, in a flat with a lug-sail. About mid-way of the three miles, a breeze sprang up from sea-ward; had it blown stiff, or in gusts, we must have gone over, inevitably. In shooting at a flight of fowl, gunners always find it necessary to take their aim well *before* them, from one, or two or three feet, according to their course; and another necessary precaution is, to keep the locks of their guns dry, either by proper cover, or using those which are said to be waterproof.

SLEDGING FOR FOWL

THE Sledge is merely a different float from the Punt, applicable to a similar purpose. It is composed of rushes or the like, laid over a bottom of wood. On this soft bed, as the Plate exhibits, the fowler lies extended at his length, with his long gun presented, and floats about the lake, mere, or large piece of water, frequented by fowl. Certainly, this plan does not present the facilities and conveniences of a punt; nor are we aware that sledging is practised by night. It is perhaps not so liable to alarm the fowl by day as a boat. These shooters have also their plashes or mud shoes, on which they slip over the ouze, in search of the fowl they may have shot, a service not without danger by night. The numbers of fowl shot and brought away, in a successful day or night, are wonderful; and yet the wonder ceases, when we consider, that upwards of seventy-four brent geese have been dropped by a single shot. The advantageous time for wild fowl shooting, is either the first breaking up of a sharp

frost and deep snow, or at the commencement, with a strong easterly wind; in both these crises, the fowl fly lower than beneath a clear sky and settled frost. In the latter case, they fly with such a wonderful rapidity, and must often be aimed at in nearly a perpendicular direction, perpetually crossing the shooter, that a practised hand, with a good piece and correct lock, are real requisites to success. Indeed, all fowl do not reach the speed of wild swans, or brent geese, the former of which, with a brisk wind in their favour, are said to reach the wonderful speed or rate of one hundred miles per hour! When killed they seldom fall less than from twenty to fifty yards from the spot where they were stricken by the shot.

POACHERS

OUR Poachers, in the act of bagging their game, appear suddenly stopped, with their eyes anxiously directed to a quarter, whence some noise has issued that may portend the sudden pouncing upon them of the keepers! The watchful and faithful dogs, likewise, share in the alarm; and the lurcher, standing foremost, shows great agitation. Thus these wretched men, whether in their nocturnal expeditions, or by day, in their insecure home, exist in a constant state of anxiety, which confirmed habit, and desperation alone, can render supportable.

The methods taken by this class of outlaws, as they may be deemed, are generally snaring and netting the game; shooting, chiefly, pheasants, which are a sufficiently visible mark on the leafless trees; and they sometimes make use of a game cock as an assistant, and various other manœuvres. Poaching is carried on to a great extent, by the miners, in those districts, particularly in the vicinity of the lead mines.

The trade has been long established and regular, and thence is supplied that vast body of the population, great part of it in opulent circumstances, which certain wise and noble landed noodles have decided shall not eat game, the common property of a whole people, without their gracious licence and permission. In contempt, however, of such notable resolve, the regular traders have always dared to sell game, which they purchase from those irregular proveditors, the Poachers. The stage-coaches materially assist in the transit of this commodity to the metropolis; and all the parties concerned, bestow their broad grins and their contempt on those *wiseacres*, who still feel bold in opposing those enlightened and patriotic Members of Parliament, who would use their endeavours to expunge from our statute-book that tyrannical, bloody, and senseless farrago of ancient rubbish, too well known by the name of the Game Laws.

This legislative and too serious burlesque has introduced and perpetuated, in a civilized country, a constant state of warfare between two classes of the inhabitants. The successors and imitators of the ancient feudal tyrants, finding no other means of supporting their peculiar laws of odious monopoly than by an armed force, have had recourse to an army of game-keepers. Between these, and the game purveyors for the nation, or poachers,

constant and shameful scenes of hostility and bloodshed are going forward. However, the newspaper relations of these, must be received with some grains of caution, as to *armies* of poachers, or of such numbers in a body, as are said to march together. From two, to four or five, are the most usual numbers, and they are generally well armed. They sometimes make use of the air-gun to prevent discovery. The keepers have smarted so severely in some of these encounters, that it is reported, they, as a body generally, are not much enamoured of the service; and a poulterer, of whom we occasionally purchase game, has lately informed us, that, on several large estates, the keepers have come to a compromise with their adversaries, wink at their employment, and have only, now and then, a *pro forma* brush with them, to save appearances. Unjust and impolitic laws, in an enlightened state of society, necessarily defeat their own ends; nor will mere half-way and palliative legislation much amend the matter.

FERRETING RABBITS

THE prolific nature of rabbits, and the destruction they occasion to the land and crops of the farmers in the neighbourhood of the warrens, renders it necessary that corresponding exertions should be made to keep their continually increasing numbers under. For this purpose, the snare and springe is frequently used as an auxiliary to the gun; but, owing to the profit accruing from their skins and carcases when in a wild state, the breed is encouraged, to the detriment of every one but the warrener and the poacher.

The ferret in its wild state, is a most destructive enemy to the rabbit, and when domesticated is used for the purpose of either drawing or driving them from their burrows.

To bring the ferret to a knowledge of what is required of him, is to be accomplished only by frequent employment with the more domestic ones, whose sagacity generally complete what art can with difficulty teach, though in some, so

inveterate is habit, that they can never be reclaimed from killing.

The warrener having a number of ferrets that he can depend on, and provided with his dogs, netting, &c. with which to surround the burrows for some distance, he proceeds to send a single ferret in. Owing to their depth and intricacy, it occupies some time before the ferret can find his adversary, who by occupying the compartment the ferret has previously searched, frequently baffles his sagacity; and sometimes the ferret, finding an outlet unperceived by his master, makes his escape to his native woods. When a reasonable time has elapsed, and neither the rabbit or ferret make their appearance, another, and sometimes two are sent in, for it may happen that a rabbit is a match for his antagonist. Let the reader suppose a ferret in view of his prize, the rabbit at the bottom of his burrow, waiting with anxiety an opportunity to spring over his enemy, and the ferret watching the moment to seize him in his attempt, his eyes glaring with an eagerness and keenness hardly surpassed by the brilliancy of fire itself; he escapes, pursued by the active ferret, and on his emergence into the light of day, he is seized by the still nimbler dogs, and in an instant is no more!

In this manner successive burrows are visited, and great numbers taken. To prevent the ferret

catching the rabbits by the throats, warreners are obliged to sew up their mouths, a precaution which should not be neglected, or the rabbits would be killed by the ferrets in their retreats.

This sport in a great measure depends on the tractability of the ferrets. The eagerness of the dogs, who are ever on the alert, and who seem to enjoy it with greater zest than their masters, greatly adds to the pleasure and amusement of its followers. It is sometimes necessary to dig the ferret out, who is reluctant to leave the asylum he has cleared of its inmates.

RUNNING A BADGER TO BAY

THE BADGER is the largest animal in this country of the *vermin* class, being between two and three feet in length, exclusive of the tail, and weighs from fifteen to upwards of thirty pounds. It is an animal of thick and awkward form, bearing some resemblance to the hog; but in its progression, treading upon the whole heel, like the bear. It was formerly said, among other wonderful and ridiculous assertions, that the legs of the Badger were longer on one side than the other; the truth is, that the rather disproportionate superior length of the hinder legs impedes the animal's progress over a level surface, whilst the circumstance is said to accelerate it over ridged or ploughed land, thereby affording it an advantage over the dog. The *hoax* of the aged and blind Badgers being fed by the young, and of the truly scientific division of Badger-labour in the digging and construction of their earths, or chambers, the one Badger being a *carter*, and the other a *cart!* is well worthy of the disciple of the prince of

marvel-mongers, Pliny. The legs and feet, however, of these animals, are short, and very strong, each foot being armed with long and powerful claws, by which they are enabled to dig their subterraneous dwellings, having but one entrance, yet several divisions or apartments. Modern research has not confirmed the ancient assertion of two varieties of the Badger, the one carnivorous, the other feeding only upon roots and vegetables; nor verified the bad character of the animal, formerly believed or pretended, with respect to his mischievous propensities. He will eat flesh, no doubt, but being rather a sluggish and sleepy animal, he is generally contented with roots, and any aliment of the vegetable kind which can be obtained without the labour of much research. In some parts of the world, Badger's flesh is a common article of human food; and in this country, Badger-hams are said to be excellent. The fat and skin are also in great request.

This animal is by no means so plentiful in England as formerly, nor the hunting him so much in vogue. It is a night-hunt, by moonlight. The arrangement is to stop all the earths, one or two excepted, whilst the Badger is abroad questing, and to place a sack at the entrance of the holes left unstopped, with its mouth extended, the drawing-strings of the mouth of the sack

being so contrived as to shut the mouth fast, the strings being strained. The Badger driven to earth will enter the sack, strain the strings, and confine himself. In the meantime, it is necessary for men to be concealed near the earth, in order, on the instant, to secure the prisoner. The traps being thus laid, two or three couples of hounds, or terriers, are thrown off, at the distance of about half or three-quarters of a mile from the earths. These start and drive home the game, which is either caught, or left above-ground, for the pursuit of the hounds. The best of this sport is, when the hounds run in upon the Badger, before he can reach his den, when he will stand at bay, like the wild boar, and turning upon his back, his natural position both for offence and defence, he will use his sharp teeth and claws with such vigour and effect, that two or three couple of staunch and fierce dogs will not achieve a conquest over him, without retaining many bloody marks of his powers and of his vengeance.

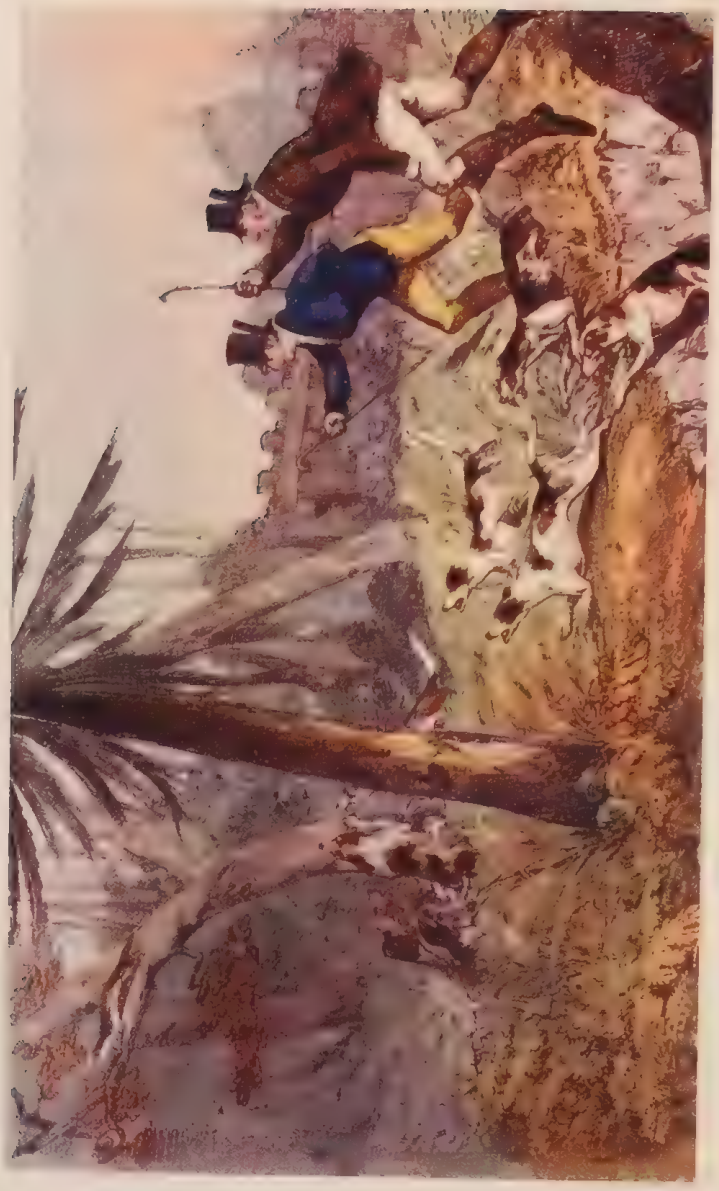
OTTER HUNTING

THE Otter is an amphibious animal, formed like the Weasel, but of considerable size and predatory habits, and found in all European countries; indeed, generally in the cold and temperate zones. The average weight of this animal, when full grown, amounts to nearly thirty pounds; the maximum being upwards of forty. Its flesh is rarely eaten, being very coarse, and like that of all animals which feed upon fish, of a rank and disagreeable flavour. There is an exception, however, in favour of the *inwards* of the Otter, and the heart is said to make a high-flavoured and luxurious dish. The skin, well dressed, makes soft and lasting gloves, which will resist the wet beyond all others. The Otter is naturally of a playful disposition, and has often been domesticated and used for the purpose of catching fish; and has even been said to have accompanied the hounds in the hunt of its own kind. Having been generally hunted with the view of extirpation, as the great destroyers of

fish, Otters have seldom been very numerous in this country, but have increased considerably in *Essex*, where has lately been a successful hunt of them.

This animal breeds but once in the year, producing three to six cubs. It frequents fresh water, particularly narrow rivers, meres, and ponds; and, exclusive of the destruction made among the fish, would pay an equal attention to any man's poultry at a reasonable distance from the water-side. The Otter is a fox upon land, and has, in some few instances, been found several miles distant from the water-side. Alarmed, it always takes water. It affects a dry bed, with a portion of the cunning of its cousin-german, the beaver, forming its *couch* under-ground, with a small opening or mouth, which is sometimes found in the midst of a thick bush, and at others, in the hollow of a willow tree, or even in the top of a pollard.

The Otter may be taken by nets or traps, or hunted and SPEARED. Formerly, according to *Somerville* the poet, the deep-flewed, heavy-eared hounds were used in this hunt; but any strong and courageous dogs, which take to the water readily, will answer the purpose; granting them of size and weight too great to be drawn under water by the Otter, and of skin sufficiently thick to endure his badger-like and radical bite.



HUNTING THE MARTIN

THE Plate gives a very natural and correct view of the MARTIN hunt, which is conducted in the same manner as that of the squirrel. We think, however, that, terriers are better fitted for hunting the Martin, than heavier dogs. The chase of this animal will sometimes continue for several hours, during which many miles of ground will be run over, the dogs, if at a check, never losing, as the cat seldom or never runs to earth; but when run in upon, climbs a tree, leaping from one tree to another, or takes shelter in a covert. When the cat is obstinate, and will not quit the tree, which it has climbed for security, and the recovery of her wind, the hounds baying her below, it is usual to throw at, and cudgel her down. Driven to her last shift, she will sometimes jump down, and alight in the midst of the very jaws of the dogs, all and every one mad to snap her up, which she generally and almost miraculously eludes, by her wonderfully natural agility. This is the very acme of the sport, and the escape of

the cat, and renewed chase, is greeted by a merry and thundering halloo! At the death, if the chase has not been long, and the Martin fresh, she sells her life dear, and never fails to leave to the most forward dogs, a good legacy, by *will*, written on their noses.

The Martin is of a musky and sweet odour, which greatly enhances the value of its fur. Its general length of body at full growth, about a foot and a half, with a bushy tail almost a foot long; of a black tan colour, with a white throat, the belly of a red dusky brown, the legs and feet of a chocolate brown, the lower sides being covered with a thick ash coloured down, similar to the under coat of the other parts of the body. The whole fur is of a lighter hue in winter, and when old, the animal is nearly ash coloured. The Martin, like the squirrel, inhabits the woods, breeding in hollow trees, and making use of the nests of magpies and the larger birds, the young of which it may have devoured. It preys on small birds and game, rats, mice, and poultry, when that comes within its reach; and is said to be very fond of honey, whence bee-hives are not very safe in proximity to woods. It must never be suffered near pheasant preserves, as it will tear those valuable birds down from the roost. We have often wished to domesticate the Martin, on account of its agility and playfulness, and its

pleasant scent. The Pine Martin builds its nest on the summit of trees of the pine tribe. This animal, formerly rather plentiful on the New Forest, and in Essex and Suffolk, has for many years, become annually, more scarce.

ANGLING

THE subject of the accompanying Plate is Ground Fishing, with a float. The success of the angler depends not only on a perfect knowledge of the requisite baits for each fish, and for each successive month, but a careful observance of the weather. Fish are very susceptible of cold, and a wind from the N. or N. E. invariably drives them for warmth, into holes, among the thickest weeds, or under shelving banks, whence the most tempting baits will not allure them, particularly in pond fishing. The best time is when the weather is moderately warm and close, the motion of the water scarcely perceptible, and a thin smoke gradually rising on the surface of the stream. The kinds of fish angled for on the ground, are chiefly barbel, bream, carp, chub, dace, eels, gudgeons, pike, perch, roach, trout, tench, &c. The angler having arranged his tackle in order the preceding night, should never be later at the spot than four o'clock, when, if the weather is favourable, he may depend on

success. The depth being ascertained, he fastens his float that the hook may swim about three inches from the ground, and the nearer he puts in to weeds, shelving banks, or under the roots of trees, the more successful he is likely to prove for perch, which generally choose their haunts in those places, or in deep holes, where they keep together in great numbers. The perch is extremely voracious, and as he is seldom known to leave a bait till he has gorged the hook, some time should be allowed him for that purpose; when the float is pulled fairly under water, then the Angler should strike, and he may remain secure of his fish. By this method he may take every perch; but if, through impatience, he strike before the hook is swallowed, he may shift his quarters, for not one will he take in that place.

The usual period for perch fishing, is the beginning of May, and it may be continued till September, but professed Anglers seldom follow it longer than the end of June or the commencement of July. The common baits are small fish, lob and red worms, well scoured, cad-bait, and gentles. When angling for the perch in rapid streams, among weeds, a minnow or small frog are the best baits. With the hook placed through the upper lip of the minnow, he should be suffered to swim about mid-deep, having a large cork float

on the line, which should be leaded to keep it at the proper depth. Perch of a very large size are thus caught; and as any attempt to kill them by play, from the situation, would be fruitless, the tackle should be of a strength to defy his utmost efforts. This branch of angling will put the patience of the sportsman to the test, for he may expect to catch but few, and far between; but they will, however, amply compensate for his time, for perch caught by the minnow or frog in these places, are of great weight and delicacy.

Barbel and pike are generally taken by trolling, with live bait; a small dace or gudgeon is preferable. They are to be found in still, shady, unfrequented waters, among weeds: the season is from the beginning of May to the end of February. The rods used in trolling must be strong, about three yards and a half long, and the line of green silk, at least thirty, which will make it requisite to use a winch. Plenty of time must be allowed them to gorge the hook.

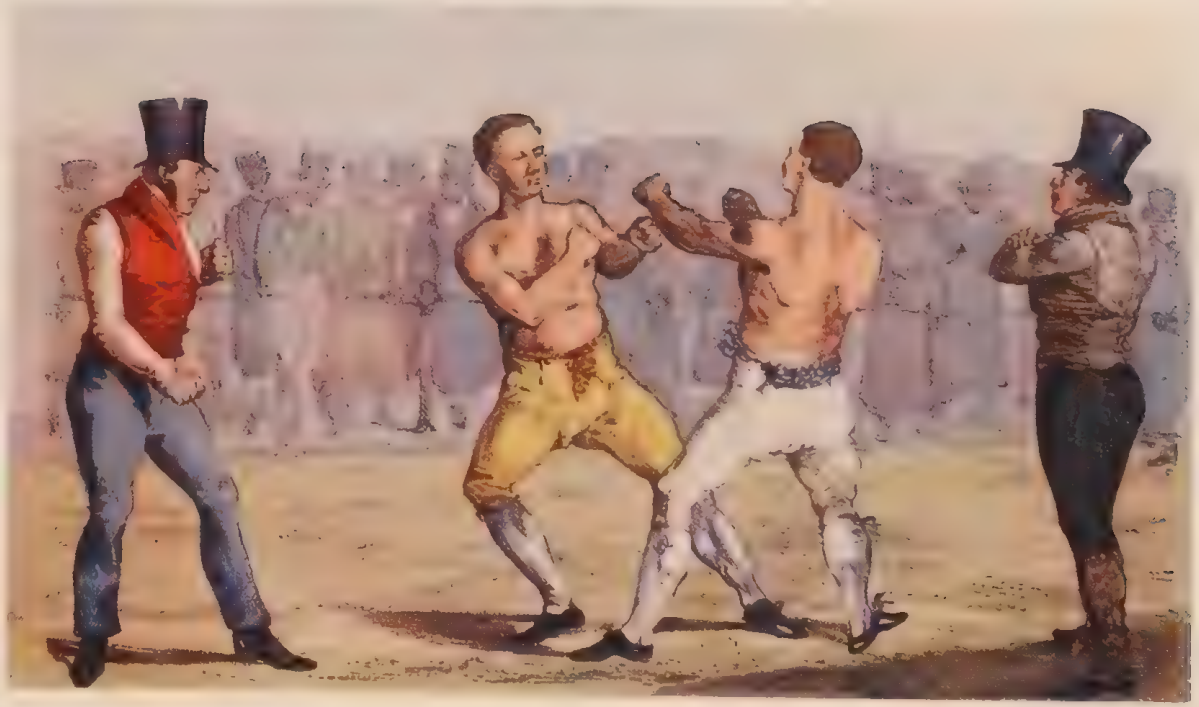
Carp, tench, trout, dace, roach, eels, are taken by a similar method to the perch, except that a *sweet bait* is best for the two former, made of flour and honey. They should be angled for as near weeds (if in ponds) as possible. Trout, dace, &c. are most frequently found at the bottom of deep, clear, gravelly streams, or at mill-tails, where they lie in great numbers. Owing to the quantity

of feed they meet with in the latter places, they are very shy, and cautious of biting, though the largest kinds are there to be found. Various other ways of taking fish may be pursued; but as we do not mean to encourage poaching, or unsportsman-like methods, we shall abstain from saying anything on the subject.

FLY-FISHING

FLY-FISHING for Trout may be considered as the *ne plus ultra* of angling; as it not only requires greater skill in the pursuit, but yields more true sport than any other mode of fishing in practice. The season commences in the beginning of April, and may be followed through the Summer months. The earliest hours are generally recommended, but the Trout or Dace, will take a fly at almost any hour of the day. The best streams are mill, or rapid shallow stony-bottom rivers, to the gravel of which the sun can penetrate, where the Trout delight to bask in its heat. The angler having provided himself with a light, taper, ringed rod, armed with a spear, and a good running winch, and an assortment of well-made flies, he will consult the appearance of the weather: if the wind blow light from the S. or S. W. he may depend on good sport. Great judgment and frequent use is required to throw a good line. The length of it to a *good caster* is immaterial. The angler, hold-

ing the rod in one hand, and the line just above the fly in the other, should give his rod a motion from right to left, and, as he moves the rod backwards, must dismiss the line from his hand at the same time; in raising the rod to throw the line, it is necessary to wave the rod a little round the head, for if it is brought directly backwards, or returned before it has streamed its full length behind, the fly will be whipped off. The professed sportsman only bags those fish that he may feel a pride in showing, or such as will grace his table; the smaller fry he returns to their native element, as it will increase his sport at a future opportunity. When a good fish is hooked, then the skill of the Fly-Fisher appears, and it is truly a delight to those who may be looking on, to observe the judgment requisite to kill the fish. Trout and salmon-trout are taken sometimes of so large a size, that it excites surprise in persons unacquainted with Fly Fishing, how a fish can be brought safely to land by a few horse hairs, which, but for the skill of the angler, were it ten times the thickness, the fish would snap with the greatest ease. On the whole, independent of the gratification Angling affords, we know of no amusement more rational, or conducive to health, than Fly-Fishing.



A PRIZE-FIGHT

PRIZE-FIGHTING with the fists, formerly styled *Boxing*, subsequently *Pugilism*, but in our modern fashionable slang, *Milling*, a truly significant term, is no doubt derived from the contentions of the gladiators, in the arena of ancient Rome, where the most bloody scenes, wounds, mutilation, death itself, were witnessed, not barely with apathy, but with extreme and enthusiastic delight by the spectators, male and female, and those in the most elevated ranks of society! In the modern English milling arena, in good and comfortable sooth, we do not indeed expect or desire to behold sights so appalling and tragical; yet we do experience a gratification in the spectacle, of robust bodily powers, and undaunted courage, exerted with manly fortitude and true English game. For the chronology of this sport, and the biography of its votaries, we must refer our readers to those text-books, the volumes of the *Sporting Magazine*, and *Boxiana*. It is sufficient for us to repeat, that pugilism, in this country, has been contemporary with horse-

The plate fully and correctly expresses the manner and *costume* of a modern *English Prize-Fight*. The periodical sparring meetings in the metropolis, are well known. Two circumstances, with respect to this sport, are greatly to be regretted; first, the want of a regular pugilistic theatre, and the frequent degrading necessity of stealing a boxing-match; and last, but not least, the accompaniment of bull and badger-baiting, an infamous and nationally disgraceful practice, on which we have already expressed our sentiments. For the best specimens of the modern *slang*, used in boxing descriptions, we once more refer to the works of the ingenious *Mr. Egan*.

DOG-FIGHT

THIS Sport is the most captivating, the very *crack* of all others, not only to the butchers and drovers of the metropolis, but to the whole herd of the lowest and most infamous rabble of nackers, dog's-meat men, jackass drivers, prigs, kencrackers, rum kiddies, flash men, and knowing ones of most descriptions. The far greater part of the business is transacted in the fields, near the town, westward, and towards the east, beyond Battle-bridge, where, on every Sunday morning, great numbers of the most execrable miscreants, under heaven, are collected, and allowed to perpetrate the most horrible cruelties on such unfortunate animals as may have been provided for the purpose, or may fall in their way. The poor cat, stolen from her home, is one of the most common victims. These are the great schools of barbarism and cruelty for the lower classes, and the best nurseries for thieves; and seem to be winked at in this reforming season, under the strange notion, that '*we must not interfere with, or abridge the Sports of the lower people.*' Whatever policy there may be in such

a proposition, it surely has not much morality to boast. The Sport, however, is conducted in a more regular way at the Westminster Pit, and at Reuben Martin's Pit, in Tottenham Court-road, of which the plate gives a very correct specimen. These meetings are usually attended by a class somewhat above those already described, and even by a few individual choice spirits of our Aristocracy. Whether Mr. Lawrence, in his Discriminative View of Animal Sports, classes Dog-fighting among the legitimate and allowable, we cannot determine; but he seems to make no objection to 'voluntary combats.' There was formerly a phrase much in vogue among the flash men and women of the day, applicable to both *flats* and sharps—'He does not, or he does, know common sense from dog-fighting.' For some years past the Bull-terrier, a mixture of the two breeds, has been the fashionable sort chosen for this choice diversion. Some months since, there was a match for a cool hundred between the *tyke* of a gallant Colonel, hight Razor, in colour white, and the *buffer* of Oxford Bill, Driver, a fallow-smut. It turned out, however, to be a *double* rum, or rather queer go, as the Colonel found to his cost, being clearly out-generalled by his honourable associates, who seem to have known 'common sense from dog-fighting,' though the Colonel did not.

COCK-FIGHTING

COCK-FIGHTING, or as it has been long styled, *Cocking*, is a sport of high and classical antiquity, having been practised by the ancient *Greeks* and *Romans*, and, in all probability, by the ancient *Hindoos*, since in the Eastern countries customs are unvarying, and equally permanent with the nations themselves by whom they are practised; and in the present times, this is a favourite sport with the natives of India, where they have a large and fine breed of *Game Cocks*. Yet, probably, *Britain* and *Ireland* are the only countries in which, by analogy of the race-horse, game, or thorough-bred Cocks are kept apart, expressly for the purpose of fighting. The common, or dung-hill cock, indeed, of all countries, will fight, but such are utterly unable to contend with that species, which, like the thorough-bred horse in the course, nature seems to have formed with peculiar aptitude and qualification for the battle. This species it is, distinguished by symmetry of form, fineness of

bone, and beauty of plumage, which has been selected by our original *amateurs* for the national diversion of *Cock-fighting*.

Cock-fighting has been practised in England during seven or eight centuries, or in all probability much longer, since it is the opinion of some antiquaries, that it was originally introduced by the ancient Romans. Its head-quarters in London are the Cock-pit Royal; in the country, it generally attends racing, as there is seldom a race-course without the accompaniment of a Cock-pit.

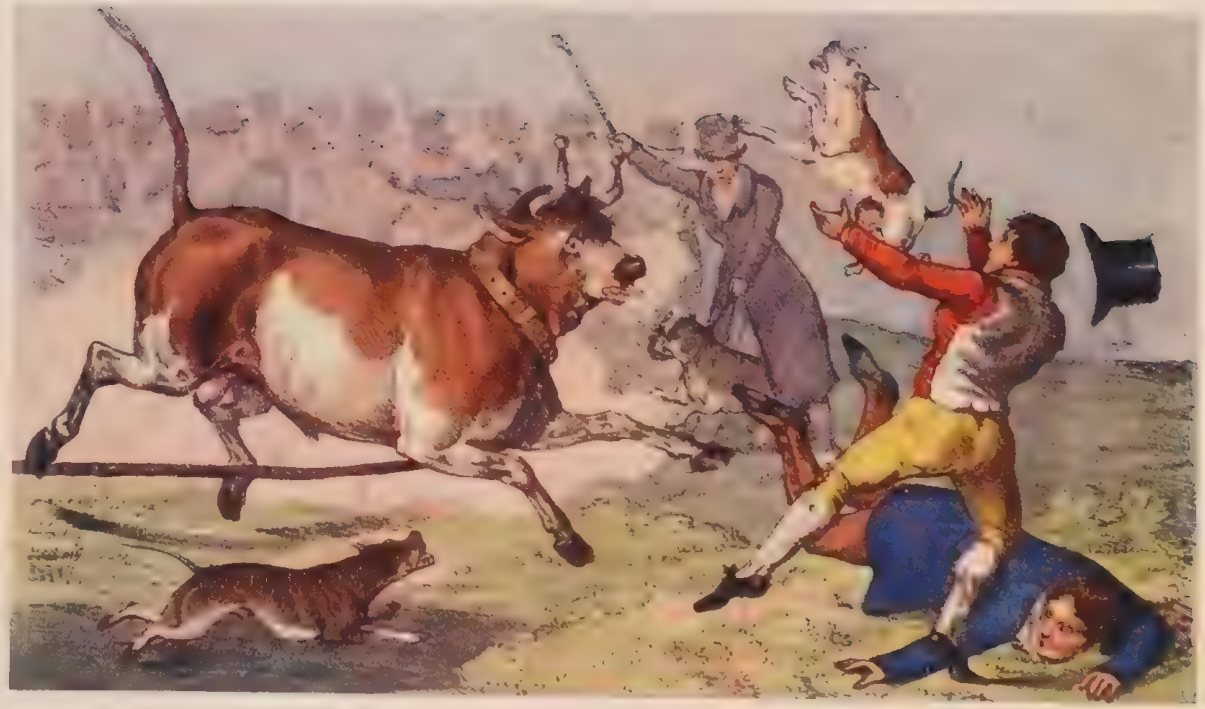
As has been observed, the breed of Game fowls is a distinct variety, trained or fed for the express purpose of fighting; and the breeds of this or that county, or breeder, in turn bear the bell; as this or that racing-blood upon the turf bears the stamp of fashion, until supplanted by some other, from incidental success. The young Cock, being well bred, and of sufficient promise from shape and size, of the latter a medium being preferred, is sent to his *walk*, as it is called, where he remains until two years old; at which period he attains his full size and powers, and his spurs their perfection. It is held that Cocks, before the completion of this age, do not, on trial, discover their goodness or game, however conspicuous their courage. Considerable sums are won and lost, annually, at this not very tender-

hearted diversion; and a certain number of persons obtain a living from their calling as feeders. The flesh of Game fowls has ever maintained the highest reputation at table, for delicacy and flavour.

In the justly-celebrated and decisive naval engagement of Lord Howe's fleet with that of France, on the 1st of June, 1794, a game-cock on board one of our ships chanced to have his house beaten to pieces by a shot, or some falling rigging, which accident set him at liberty; the feathered hero, now perched on the stump of the mainmast, which had been carried away, continued crowing and clapping his wings during the remainder of the engagement, enjoying, to all appearance, the thundering horrors of the scene.—*Philosophical and Practical Treatise on Horses.*

The description of a WELSH MAIN will not contribute to elevate the diversion of Cock-fighting in the estimation of those who can feel for animal nature. It consists of a fixed number of pairs of cocks, for example, sixteen. These sixteen first enter the lists, and fight until the one half of them fall. The sixteen conquerors are again pitted, and fight the battle over again, until half are killed. The surviving eight are now summoned anew to play an effective part in the same tragedy. The four left are compelled to this fatal exhibition a fourth time, which

leaves a single pair to contend for final victory, and a single survivor! And thus thirty-one cocks are massacred, partly for the joke's sake, however sorry the joke, but chiefly for the sake of pelf. We recollect the account of a famous Welsh Main of former times, in which the last pair waged internecine battle, the conqueror making a last and successful effort with his weapon, and striking his opponent dead, at the instant himself falling lifeless with excess of exertion:—thus, in the language of King Arthur, in Tom Thumb, making himself death *bon goose*.



BULL-BAITING

THE figure here delineated, with great truth and spirit, is that which is styled a GAME-BULL, namely, one which is naturally spirited, fierce, and prone to the combat, and which besides, from the training of being repeatedly baited, has acquired a skill in the exercise of his dreadful means of offence, and a temper and wariness of conduct in receiving and repelling the attacks of his antagonists the dogs. The athletic forms, and the attitudes of the bull-hankers in their attempt to catch and break the fall of the dogs, tossed into the air, are well expressed.

The bull is generally allowed a hole in the earth, in which to thrust and cover his nose and lips, his most vulnerable parts, and of this defence he learns to take advantage after a few attacks. At least such was the practice formerly. The true-bred bull-dog is known by certain distinguishing characteristics, that, in particular, of silence in his attack; for he seldom

or never barks. He always attacks his enemy in front, aiming at the head and face chiefly, although being disappointed in those parts, he will fasten upon the throat. He will seize the eye, but his favourite aim is the nether-jaw, the lip, or the tongue; nature seeming to have taught him instinctively, that those parts are the most vulnerable and most convenient for his tenacious gripe. Having thus fixed the *holders* of his under-jaw, in the lip or tongue of the poor victim bull, the latter utters a most tremendous and piteous roar, and these, his agonised feelings, it is which impart supreme delight to the sensible hearts of the surrounding crew!

Nothing but a greater force than is in his power to exert, can break the hold of the bull-dog, and he is endowed by nature with the highest possible degree of courage. This has been repeatedly put to the most cruel tests, by our savage English blackguards. The four feet of a bull-bitch have been cut off, and she has run at the bull upon her bleeding stumps! Very lately, in the *west*, near *Exeter*, a bull-dog, being tossed, broke a leg in its fall. The leg was instantly spliced, and the dog again, in that maimed state, ran at the bull! The rumour of this beastly act of cruelty reaching the magistracy, seems to have operated, as it really ought, in the cause of humanity; and bull-

baiting is prohibited in future, in that place, as a breach of the public peace. May this be a universal example, that Englishmen may no longer have to blush for the government of their country! The *bull-fights* of *Spain* and *Portugal* are equally atrocious, but far more dangerous and manly than *English* bull-baits. May the present political reforms, in those countries, also induce moral reforms, corrective of such vicious and degrading national customs!

To a late work, we are indebted for the following account of the origin of BULL-BAITING in this country. The first bull-bait, of which any record is to be found, took place in *Lincolnshire*, in the reign of *King John*; and *William, Earl Warren, Lord of Stamford*, has the infamous honour of being handed down to posterity, as the originator and patron of that insensate and beastly diversion. This noble, worthy of the half-savage times in which he lived, standing on the wall of *Stamford Castle*, saw two bulls fighting for a female, in the castle-meadow, until one of the bulls, attacked and affrighted by some butchers' dogs, was by them pursued quite through the town. This sight so tickled and aroused the sporting sensations of the noble Earl, that he immediately made over, as a gift to the butchers of the town, the said castle-meadow, as a common, after the first crop of

grass had been mowed, on condition that they should annually find a *mad bull*, the day six weeks before Christmas-day, to be devoted to that sport, which was *to be continued for ever.*

In one or two instances, our clergy have stood forth to explain the wickedness and infamy of this unnatural and pseudo-diversion. The press has taken the part of outraged humanity; and, in particular, the *Sporting Magazine*, infinitely to its honour, has, for a series of years, most perseveringly exerted itself in the same just and moral cause. Their exertions have been not altogether useless; for although bull-baiting and the baiting of other animals still prevail, to a degree to be lamented, yet the extent of such barbarous follies is, in no degree of comparison, equal to that of former times.

BEAR-BAITING

MR. STRUTT, in his excellent and amusing book on the '*Sports and Pastimes of the People of England*,' makes the following observation, which, although we cannot accept literally, no doubt affords a considerable degree of consolation to those who wish well to the interests of humanity, and to the moral reputation of our country.—"Bull and Bear-baiting is not encouraged by persons of rank and opulence in the present day; and when practised, which rarely happens, it is attended only by the lowest and most despicable part of the people; which plainly indicates a general refinement of manners, and prevalence of humanity among the moderns; on the contrary, this barbarous pastime was highly relished by the nobility of former ages, and countenanced by persons of the most exalted rank, and without exception even of the fair sex."

In those days of rudeness and insensibility, even the noble and generous horse and patient ass were tortured under that execrable name

for diversion — *baiting*. In short, the brute creation was ransacked, to find out animals endowed with the keenest sensibility, in order to expose it to the most violent outrages. A theatre was erected in London, under the sanction of both Church and State, for the keeping of bulls and bears, to be baited for public diversion, by great English bull-dogs, as a foreign writer expresses it. Both *Queen Mary* and *Queen Elizabeth* took delight in viewing these barbarous and bloody spectacles. To the baiting, frequently succeeded so mean and dastardly an entertainment, that it is impossible to find words sufficiently expressive of loathing and contempt in which to describe it—whipping a blinded bear! This was performed by five or six men standing circularly with whips, which they exercised upon the unfortunate animal without mercy, and which he could not avoid on account of his chain. So infatuated were the good people of this country, in the sixteenth century, with the *diversion* of witnessing the tortured feelings of animals, that a cotemporary writer (Cartwright) says — "If there be a bear or a bull to be baited in the afternoon, or a jackanapes to ride on horseback, the minister hurries the service over in a shameful manner, in order to be present at the show."

The Plate discovers full as much of this infamous and degrading practice as, we humbly

presume, any reader of common sense and common humanity would desire to know. We learn from 'Hudibras,' that the man who had the management of the bear was styled the *bear-ward*, and that—

"First Trulla staved and Cerdon tailed."

Staving and *tailing* then may, for aught we know or care, be still among the technical terms of the noble art of Bear-baiting; in which we pretend to no knowledge or experience, being fair and lawful Sportsmen, not beastly and unnatural torturers and executioners!

BADGER-BAITING

THIS most quiet and harmless animal, at the same time possessing invincible and endless courage, has the misfortune to be selected with the bull, for the pious national *English* purpose of baiting. Badger-baiting is even yet customary throughout the country, at fairs and races, and in the outskirts of the metropolis at all seasons, as a standing dish of amusement for the dissipated and vulgar of all descriptions, noble, gentle, or simple. These relics of ancient barbarism are chiefly preserved in existence by a low and disreputable class of publicans, who find an interest in it, and whose houses are frequently the resort of bad characters. The artist, we think, in this Plate, has evinced both knowledge and genius in depicting the countenances of his heroes. Never were coldness of heart, and a mean, grasping disposition better pourtrayed in a round and jolly youthful phiz, than in that of the upright-shaped *gemman* with his hand upon his hip. Granting it a portrait,

we call upon the original to look upon it and bless himself!

The instant of opening the door of the Badger's kennel, the dog being loosed, darts forward with the rapidity of a shot, into the box, the attendant still retaining hold of his tail. The Badger being drawn, one attendant, upon a level with him in sharpness and strength of teeth, and true unadulterated beastliness, seizes either the tail or leg of the dog, which he bites with a true vermin gripe, (smoke his phiz!) in order, by the extreme excitement of pain of a superior degree to that afforded by the bite of the Badger himself, the *fixer* may be induced to let go his hold; in the meantime the Badger's *ward* lays hold of the tail, while his *gemman*, keeping an exact account of the time expended by his brother brutes in their contention, prepares to assist in returning the Badger to his box, by taking him by the tail or pole. Re-kennelled, the poor devil of animal, which, if he possess the power of wonderment, must indeed wonder what he has done to bring upon himself this repeated torture, is very soon exposed to a fresh attack, and is again drawn and replaced; and thus he suffers, until the beastly inclinations or cupidity of his torturers and murderers are satiated!

Whilst we decry, and denounce at the bar of humanity, these infamous and torturing pro-

pensities, we have not one word to urge against fairly hunting the Badger in the field, and witnessing those natural antipathies and consequent combats between him and the vermin-dogs. It is a dispensation of nature, and these natural antagonists would fight, did they meet in a desart, unaccompanied by man. It is then a lawful, and may be a useful sport; and, finally, we have not one drop of *puritanical*, mixed with our sporting blood.

The metropolitan Badger-ward, if we may be allowed to adopt that ancient phrase of the bear-garden, keeps his Badger in a box, and for the preservation of the animal, which is of more worth, and not so easily obtained as in the country; in other words, for the prolongation of his tortures, watches over his combat with the dogs, and secures to him fair play, according to the established rules of Badger-law. The dogs in the highest repute for this Sport, are bull-terriers or *fixers*. The *jist* of the match, and object of betting are, the number of times the dog will draw the badger from his box, within a given space of time, determined by the stop-watch. It is almost incredible, considering the strength and powers of offence, with the sharp teeth of the Badger, how often he will be drawn within the usual time, by a well-bred and thoroughly-trained dog. As an illustrious example, it is recorded that, within

these few years, the dog of a *gemman, homo generosus,* no doubt, who had possessed the valuable breed during thirty years, drew a fresh, strong, and game Badger, *seventy-four times* in ten minutes!!!

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